This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

THE MAN OF TO-DAY

GEORGE S. MERRIAM

Digitized by Google

1281

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

George S. Merriam

THE MAN OF TO-DAY.
A SYMPHONY OF THE SPIRIT. Compiled by GEORGE S. MERRIAM.
THE STORY OF WILLIAM AND LUCY SMITH. With portrait.
THE CHIEF END OF MAN.
REMINISCENCES AND LETTERS OF CAROLINE C. BRIGGS.

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
BOSTON AND NEW YORK

Digitized by Google

THE MAN OF TO-DAY

Digitized by Google

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY
533666
ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS.
R 1911 L

COPYRIGHT, 1911, BY GEORGE S. MERRIAM

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Published October 1911

Digitized by Google

When visiting my sister's home, I used to wake to a music finer than the reveille of catbird and thrush, — the "sweet jargoning" of childish voices, filling the air with sounds of happy laughter and gentle play; and sunny faces came peeping in at my door. I have listened to those voices and watched those faces as morning ripened to mid-day, in school and playground, in work, comradeship, marriage, parenthood. Always the tones have spoken truth, honor, service; in the looks have shone cheer, steadfastness, victory. I inscribe this little book to my beloved sister's ten children, in whom I see manifold traits of the ideal Man and Woman of To-day, and assured promise of the Men and Women of To-morrow.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

CONTENTS

A Child's Pebble-Picture 1
What the Morning Gun said 5
Steering by the Sun 14
What Sunday may bring 26
The Tap on the Shoulder 41
In Return for Wedding Cards 55
On Finding One's Way 68
Handicapped in the Race 79
Prayers and their Answers 88
A Jack in the Pulpit 103
The Art of Married Life 114
Prison or Family? 127
To the "Don't Worry" Clubs 144
An After-Dinner Guest 157
A Portrait and a Man 167
A Soldier of Virginia 181
A Modern Apostle 192
A Talk with Phillips Brooks 200
"The Oriental Christ" 213
The Dawning Religion 226
The Meaning of "David Grieve" 235
A Gospel of Winter 247
The Message of Emerson 261
Reminiscences of Edward Everett Hale . 307
With a Silver-Wedding Gift 336

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

THE MAN OF TO-DAY

A CHILD'S PEBBLE-PICTURE

A CHILD is playing on the sea-beach with some smooth bright pebbles. Presently he sets to work to arrange them in the figure of a man. Little mosaic-maker, he does not know he is practicing the rudiments of the art that gave splendor to glorious churches like St. Mark's in Venice. Here is a round white stone, — he puts that for the head. Here are some bigger ones which a little arrangement shapes into a body. Then he supplies long and slender arms and legs; he adds an ornamental hat, — and behold, a man! And the kindly looker-on smiles at the little artist's achievement, and then looks off over the splendor of cliff and island and the "immeasurable laughter" of sunlit sea.

So, I bring together my handful of pebbles, these papers. Rather they are bits of clay, moulded each one as the day's impulse moved me. Can they be grouped into some kind of a sketchy outline of the man of to-day? A child-

Digitized by Google

ish picture of our humanity in some of its salient and ideal aspects? Let us put first the beginning of the common day, as the Morning Gun speaks its message to the dwellers in the town where our picture is traced, — much the same message that may be heard wherever the morning comes. Next, the suggestion of a fit response to the morning's call, — Steering by the Sun. Then we will put the week's beginning, the Sunday invitation. Next let us set the imperative, gracious command with which life speaks to the youth at the outset and always thereafter, — typified by the Tap on the Shoulder. And next, the happy beginning of a new life, a talk to the young people from whom we receive Wedding Cards. Then some clew or guidance for the long journey, — some light as to Finding One's Way. A harder way for some than for others, so there shall be a special word for those Handicapped in the Race. A call from still deeper need suggests Prayers and their Answers.

But are we to have only struggles or sublimities, — are there to be no more cakes and ale? A merry sprite takes the place of the black-gowned preacher, and we listen to a Jack in the Pulpit. Now back again to what some

Digitized by Google

one has called "the best church of all, the Blessed Company of Happy Married People," — illustrated by some remarks on the Art of Married Life. But to that particular church we do not all belong, and the outsiders have the greater need, so let us consider how we all can make good society around us, choosing for ourselves whether we will live in Prison or Family. And for the general matter of finding and making our own world a livable and joyful place, here is a talk to the Don't Worry Clubs. We lapse to a lighter mood in An After-Dinner Guest.

Next let us have some flesh-and-blood people. We will begin with a Portrait and a Man, — a man little known to general fame, but developing in prosaic commercial surroundings a lofty and generous manhood. Then a sketch from his own stirring story, a Soldier of Virginia. Next, a Modern Apostle, — the leader in the salvation of neglected children. Again, a face-to-face talk with a prophet in his everyday guise, — a Morning with Phillips Brooks. A seer of modern India speaks in the Oriental Christ. Next we try a bird's-eye view — a guess, if you please — at the Dawning Religion. That theme is touched again in its imaginative

Digitized by Google

presentation in Mrs. Humphry Ward's *David Grieve*. We turn to the hurrying whirlpool of New York to listen to a message which in its invigorating austerity may be called a Gospel of Winter. The most distinctive and powerful utterance of America is studied in the Message of Emerson. A type of to-day's ideals embodied in character and translated into action is shown in Reminiscences of Edward Everett Hale. Last of all we come back to our Blessed Company, and read the meaning of life as it is interpreted through the sacrament of long married years, under the guise of a Silver-Wedding Gift.

So our composite picture of to-day's humanity in its best ideals and embodiments completes itself. Does the beholder call it fragmentary and crude? Most true. So let him look up from the child's pebble-picture on the beach, and gaze at the unspeakable reality, — the universal spirit, human and divine, — more various than the earth, mightier than the sea, outsoaring the sky, outshining the sun.

Digitized by Google

WHAT THE MORNING GUN SAID

Boom! says the gun in the Armory Square at six o'clock. The Arsenal flings back the echo, and a reverberating peal of thunder spreads out and on, — through the Highlands, away to Glenwood and Brightwood, across the Connecticut, to Crescent Hill and the Watershops and Forest Park; still on, in waves too fine for the ear to catch, to Chicopee, to Agawam, to Longmeadow, to Wilbraham. What says the Morning Gun each day to him that can hear?

First day: "Awake, thou that sleepest!" At the peal of the gun, or the stroke of the clock, half of Springfield jumps out of bed, — well, "jumps" is a strong expression in some cases; let 's say, gets out of bed, — and begins the day's toil. Of the other half, part are already up and a-doing, part snuggle down for another nap, or lie in quiet thought. Each follows his own fashion. "A cold plunge," says Sleepyhead, "but here goes, — there, the tooth's out!" "Lie still, Mary," says Tom, "and get another forty winks; I'll have the fire going in a jiffy." "It's the first step that costs," says

Digitized by Google

the philosopher, "and there'll be a fine view of the dawn while I'm shaving; Zero is a famous artist on the window pane." The business man lies thinking of his affairs, and the responsibilities that seemed heavy last night look light to his renewed strength. The doctor wakes to ponder on the case that puzzled him yesterday, and the solution comes to him clear, — he understands the trouble, and how to meet it. The mother lies brooding her children in her thoughts, as she will presently brood them with her care; "in her heart a separate cell of honey for each child." The active conscience faces the day to come; recalls yesterday's slips, and sets a guard at the weak point; imagines the probable temptation, and rehearses the meeting and repulse of it; dwells on the high ideals of duty and grows strong to achieve them. The grateful heart awakes to the sense of beckoning service, encompassing beauty, enfolding love, and says, "How beautiful it is to be alive."

Second day: "The night is far spent, the day is at hand." To many the gun speaks as a signal of release and repose. The night watchman gladly turns his steps homeward. The newspaper-makers have earned their rest; two hours ago the last man from the editorial rooms

Digitized by Google

trudged home under the morning stars; the compositors are fairly in bed; the pressmen are on their way home. But there is no break in the twenty-four hours' toil that provides your paper, reader! For now the newsboys are on the march. Do you know, of our homebred captains and leaders a good part began their work as paper-boys? And will the youngster who threw your paper on the doorstep be one of the captains thirty years hence? Meanwhile, in the hospital the nurse on night duty is tip-toeing about and extinguishing the lights. The sick man hails the coming of day after the weary and lonely night. The wife, always a light sleeper during the long, hopeless decline of her invalid husband, watches from her pillow the sunrise, as she has watched it hundreds of times before, and her heavy heart is lightened by a prayer that strangely blends with thanks-giving.

Third day: "Endure hardness as a good soldier." The gun is the voice of soldiership. That stands at its best for discipline, for obedience, for fortitude. As from the beast developed the savage, so from the barbarous warrior hardly above the tiger has evolved the soldier of our civilization, trained not only to do and

Digitized by Google

dare, but to be faithful and patient in daily routine, resourceful in difficulties, loyal to comrades, his country's right hand and defender. That is a fine ideal of the soldier which Major Stiles has sketched at the close of his capital story of a Confederate's experiences, *Four Years Under Marse Robert.* "The essential character of the soldier's life is service; its everyday employment, its all-pervading law, is duty; its first lesson — obedience unquestioning; its last lesson — command unquestioned; its daily discipline — accountability unceasing; its final burden — responsibility unmeasured; its everyday experience — hardships, perils, crises unparalleled; its social atmosphere — freedom from social shams; its compensation — fixed pay; its inspiration — promotion from above." That is the soldier's business as interpreted by an idealist. Such an idealist, one thinks, would give a noble rendering of the business of a coal-miner or a steamship stoker or a scavenger. Every trade has its capacity for lofty treatment. "A servant with this clause makes drudgery divine." But what is the end and aim of soldiering as a business? That is another story.

Fourth day: "The noble art of murdering!"

Digitized by Google

So Thackeray names it, in his "Ballad of the Drum." What are we doing at this Armory? We, the American people, of whom you and I are a part? We are making a killing-machine, which we boast as the final product of modern science. The new Springfield rifle will at one discharge send a bullet through four or five men in a row. It has been demonstrated, — not with bodies, but with pine boards, an inch plank being the equivalent in resisting power of a human body. Some day it is expected that the bullets will find another target than the pine boards. It may be the little brown men of the Philippines; perhaps it will be some troublesome South Americans who have got in the way of civilization and the Canal; it may even, should the hopes of some of our heroes be fulfilled, be the Germans or the Russians, against whom our strenuous destiny casts us. Curious, how differently the same thing affects us. If on Main Street we saw a man accidentally hit by a flying piece of iron, writhing and shrieking on the ground, we should either rush to help him or run away in horror, and in either case we should sicken at the memory. But multiply the thing a thousandfold, and it becomes a battlefield, and we call it glorious. Yet a battlefield is

Digitized by Google

more than that, for its slaughter is no accident; it is wrought by men, willfully; and worse than the wounds and the deaths are the lust of killing and the waking of the tiger in man. And the battlefield is but a part; beyond it lie thousands of desolate homes, widows, orphans; after it come maimed lives dragging through suffering and crippled years. Said an old Springfield soldier, who had served gallantly through the Civil War, "The grief of one bereaved family outweighs all the glory." Said another hero of the four years, "The battles were not the worst of it, but the demoralization of countless young men in their removal from home and social influence, and the barbarism of camp-life." There is a famous picture of the battle of Gettysburg. The slaughter and smoke and flame are shown, but environed by the sky and landscape of a lovely summer day. Just as that beauty cheats the eye and veils the hell that is being acted, so our popular glorification of war cheats us as to the reality.

Fifth day: "Let us have peace." It was the word of our great captain, when the inevitable war had reached its close, when at a deadly price freedom and union had been won, and he set his face that there should be no more fight-

Digitized by Google

ing. Of Grant's eight years in the Presidency, the proudest memory is the Treaty of Washington, by which the rankling feud between America and England was settled through a peaceful arbitration. To-day, even while nations are pushing on their naval armaments in ruinous rivalry, and the European continent is an armed camp, the civilized world recoils at its own work, and seeks some effective remedy. It almost holds its breath as it watches President Taft negotiating one treaty of arbitration after another. The dream of prophets is being moulded into reality by men of affairs. Let us help! All we to whom the Morning Gun speaks its message, or to whom its peal flies on the wings of the printed page, — we, soldier or armorer or civilian, man, woman, or child, — let us, as occasion shall offer and while life shall last, help on God's cause of peace. Our fathers put an end to slavery; let us help to put an end to war!

Sixth day: "He that hath eyes to see, let him see!" On the snow lies the soft moonlight, until it melts into the white light of day. High overhead rides the waning moon, a pale half-globe. A few days more and, a silver crescent,

Digitized by Google

she will hang at evening in the western sky. Venus, the morning star, shines bright. A fringe of icicles glitters on the eaves. The trees silhouette themselves against the snow or the sky; the columnar trunks; the tracery of bough and twig, a different pattern for every tree; the upright maple, the delicate birch, the sturdy and graceful curves of the oak, the pine's dark foliage with a trimming of ermine. The first faint dawn lightens the horizon. The heaven grows mellow with purest color, or it may be a fleet of soft clouds reddens in the deepening light. The celestial pageant moves on in perfect quiet. Silent, majestic, the day comes in, and now above the farthest edge rises the orb of the sun.

Seventh day: Arise, to labor, to life, to love! Forth goes each, to his share in the household work of the great family; the mechanic to his shop, the engineer to his locomotive, the motorman to his car, the clerk to his counter, the preacher to his sermon, the teacher to her school, the maid to her housework. This big family must be fed and warmed and housed and cleaned and amused and instructed, and to each of us comes his little share of the household chores. Done grudgingly, a servitude; done

Digitized by Google

willingly, a service; done lovingly, a sacrament. A family truly it is to whoever will have it so. The helping hand, the attentive eye, the sympathetic ear, makes ever human contact sacred. Not more eloquent is the lover's caress than the stroke of toil with the heart behind it. And on our daily way we move, with what a procession to escort us! The sun marches above us by day, the stars by night; the clouds, the snowfields, the trees, attend us like a guard of honor. The sublime revolving order of the seasons pauses not for an hour. Humble dependents wait on our kindness: the horse responds to a friendly word, the dog wags an answer to a stroking hand. The saints and heroes summon us to follow in their footsteps. The All-love leads, surrounds, and fills us. Forward, always forward!

Digitized by Google

STEERING BY THE SUN

THERE is a habit that may be made a master-key of each day, and so of the life. On a ship at sea, you will notice that the captain always devotes the hour and minute of noon to a special task. No matter what else is pressing, — the most charming of his lady passengers may be talking to him, or the mate may be telling him how certain sailors seem hatching mischief, or he may be dead hungry for sleep; no matter, charmer or mischief-makers or nap must wait. He levels his instrument at the sun, notes its position, and with his observation and his tables works out the exact place of the ship. So, from that far-away and magnificent luminary, he has got his sailing orders for the next twenty-four hours.

In our human voyage there should be such a daily observation. The best time in the day is none too good for it. Fresh from sleep, with sponge drawn by kindly night over yesterday's close-scribbled slate, with an unsullied page just opened, — one may look to see where he is and where he is going.

Digitized by Google

Not a bad way to begin the observation is to think of one's self as a soldier and look for the day's marching orders. And just as a good physical beginning of the day, for a normal person, is a cold plunge, so one may do well to look first in his thoughts for something he ought to do and does not want to do, and find just there his first orders for the day. Perhaps I have been shirking a visit to the dentist, — let me say I will go to-day! Or, I know I ought to make my will, — let me set the first available time to begin it. It may be, madam, that you have some closet or cupboard whose disorder has been troubling your housewifely conscience, — is n't to-day the best day to go at it? Or you, my dear sir, know you owe a word of reparation to the clerk you growled at yesterday, — say it to yourself now, and to him when you see him. There's a shiver as we step into the bath, but how quick is the responsive glow!

The morning quiet is a good time to look largely at one's work. Largely, — not letting one's self be swept into its details and petty questions. Get the work in its best aspect; take it by the handle that will bear taking hold of, as wise Epictetus says. If it seems like drudgery, think of it now as service. You re-

Digitized by Google

member the story of the poor old fellow who all day jogged about the streets as one of a procession carrying each on a staff a large letter, which made up the legend "Tarryman's Tip-top Tea"; and one night depressed by a sense of his insignificance he dreamed that his particular letter got out of place in the procession, with result of great confusion and trouble; and awoke to realize that even his small place in the world had a meaning.

Suppose one's business is with a broom. Well, there is a hero's story at whose crisis a broom figures decisively. When a ragged, unpromising black boy asked for a place at Hampton Institute, a hesitant teacher set him experimentally to sweep a room; before she came back he had swept it four times, and when the result was seen he was promptly admitted, — and so began the lifework of Booker Washington. Or perhaps it is a money king whose eye condescends to glance at these words: Great Mr. Crœsus, when you take your morning observation, do you ask yourself whether you are using your splendid possibilities to the final end of multiplying human happiness and opportunity? Doctor, lawyer, drummer, teacher, reporter, clerk, carpenter, — each man's work

Digitized by Google

has its higher aspect and its homely side: and if the higher aspect is often looked at, the homely side will not be mean or unworthy. You may need to call up courage and energy to drive your work more vigorously. Or, if you are winning success, and are drinking the dangerous drafts of popularity, it may be the monition of this tranquil hour that you think of yourself modestly, remembering that our greatest achievements count in the world's progress only as a leaf falling to enrich the soil, or as a coral insect's contribution to a reef. Phillips Brooks, that great apostle of manhood, said once: "I like sometimes to go to Europe, if only to see my work in its true proportion. When I stand among the Alps, Trinity Church looks pretty small." And we may find spiritual Alps that will serve the same purpose.

It is well sometimes to call into our presence unhandsome and unpleasing guests, — the images of our faults. We may face them in all their ugliness, — be their names Ill-Temper, Greed, Sensuality, Jealousy, Deceit, Cowardice, or any other of the brood. We know well our own particular foes — or friends — among them. As an actor rehearses his part, as a general forecasts his foe's maneuvers, — so may

Digitized by Google

we meet in imagination our bosom enemy, and when by and by he springs upon us he shall find us on guard.

A more genial path invites our thoughts. What service, what kindness, can I render to-day? Especially to housemate, shopmate, neighbor? Charles Nordhoff says something to this effect: "The first test of a man's value is his service to — whom? The world, the nation, the community? Rather, to the human being who is nearest to him and most dependent on him." Wife, children, comrades, — there are happy fields for meditation as to good offices to these. Sometimes the best of all help, in its outcome, is just to get a sympathetic sense of another's life; to ponder his ways, his traits, his needs, his nobilities, as a doctor ponders a case or a student a problem.

We need not overwork the sense of responsibility. It is well not only to give but to receive. "I think," said a good woman, "that the only return our Father asks for his gifts is that we shall welcome and enjoy them." We may leisurely taste the banquet of life, — reviewing its genial invitations, its comforts, its opportunities, the daily splendor of Nature's show, the heart-warming affections, the sacramental joys.

Digitized by Google

For such wide excursion of thought and fancy, we need some standing-ground or starting-point on solid earth. The morning hour — halve or quarter it if you will — asks some material support and some outward setting. Our European cousins, who have worked out the little arts of life more thoroughly than we, begin their day at the very start with a cup of that noble beverage, coffee, and a roll. I have a friend who long made and enjoyed his early cup of coffee; but finding it too stimulating fell back on an oatmeal cracker and a glass of water with entire content. Perhaps he accepted the substitution more easily because he had the luxury of a wood fire. Ah, that is a supreme luxury! Automobiles, yachts, horses, pageants, — what are they all to the companionship of the sparkling, dancing, soaring, whispering flames upon the hearth! How exquisitely they mingle with the inner mood, — suggesting, inspiring, soothing. Here indeed is the shrine and the altar.

Wood fires and automobiles are alike forbidden to some of us, but rare is the man who cannot command for his morning companionship a glimpse of outdoors. Next best to the fireplace is the window. Happy is he who looks

Digitized by Google

out on an acre or two of greensward, a group of Norway spruces, a barberry hedge with its scarlet leaves and berries whitened by the frost. Not wholly poor is the looker who sees only the tree-tops above a city square or street, — in a tree, green or bare, there is always an instance of Nature's architecture and the miracle of growth; sees perhaps the glossy pigeons fluttering down, and overhead the sailing clouds or the blue sky. "From my prison window," wrote Mazzini of his early captivity, "I could look upon the sea and the sky — the grandest things God ever made, except the Alps." The coming of morning in the sky, — how it suggests the belt of light moving westward over land and ocean; the world-wide renewal of light and life and hope.

Another companionship one may have, in the books through which the great souls of the past come into our present; come nearer than most of the people we see and touch. There are the sacred scriptures, of all the ages. There is our Bible, for those who know how to use it, and where to find the "hiding of its power" and of its sweetness. There are treasures of helpful thoughts, such as that admirable manual, *Daily Strength for Daily Needs*, — when

Digitized by Google

we read of a sale of toward a quarter-million copies of that little book, it would seem that the habit of private devotion is not dying out among the American people.

Touched by the large life of Nature, quickened by some inspired voice, the soul forgets for a time both sky and prophet and enters into its own sacred place, its holy of holies. There is some memory in which sorrow and joy have blended till with the years it has become pure harmony. There is some companion spirit, near or far. The name may be one that is known and worshiped by millions; it may be unknown save by the one. Or there rises some memory of supreme personal experience; emergence from darkness to light, consecration which transfigured pain and loss, celestial disclosure in which doubt and fear were submerged, and past and future, the personal lot and the world's destiny, shone in pure radiance. Or it may be just some warm, near human happiness, which one holds closely and thankfully, saying, "It is the gift of God." Each heart that has truly lived has some such sacred chamber of its own.

In such ways one comes into some sense, — various in form as men are various, one in es-

Digitized by Google

sence as humanity is one, — some true sense of the Divine Life. There may or may not be articulate prayer. To some there is help in the forms of prayer which have been framed by holy souls and consecrated by familiar use. For some the Episcopal Prayerbook is a treasury; for others the Catholic manuals. There is one rich collection, *The Prayers of the Ages*, — from Socrates to Martineau. That book, I remember, was first shown to me by a man who was doing an ideal work and living what seemed to me an ideal life — saver of neglected children, philanthropist, philosopher. It is a happiness to recall our meeting in his lovely home upon the Hudson; and I always associate with it *The Prayers of the Ages* and one prayer of Martineau's which was his especial favorite. It begins: "Eternal God, who committest unto us the swift and solemn trust of life, since we know not what a day may bring forth, but only that the hour for serving thee is always present, grant that we may wake to the instant claims of thy holy will, not waiting for to-morrow but yielding to-day."

As I revise these pages, there comes to me a fresh book of devotion: *For God and the People: Prayers of the Social Awakening*, by

Digitized by Google

Walter Rauschenbusch. It blends the faith and fervor of the oldtime religion with to-day's gospel of active, sympathetic, universal brotherhood.

Each reverent and upward-looking heart has its own ways of speech or silence, — its own approach to the Perfect. Our truest prayers are so personal that we can scarcely communicate them to each other. A wonderful and most helpful symbol was given when Jesus taught his disciples to say "Our Father." His great and holy soul found phrases which his simple and childish followers could make their own. But in what various ways must his own aspiration and communion have breathed themselves. The height of his spoken utterance is "Thy will be done." That gives as far as words can do the attitude which it would seem any honest and humble soul may aspire to and attempt. One merges all his personal desires in the aspiration to be pure, sincere, serviceable, loving. He sets his wish toward the good of all mankind. He feels out toward that mysterious sovereign purpose which through all woe and trouble we trust is working some good beyond our thoughts. For one's self, consecration; for all men, a uniting love; for the common

Digitized by Google

destiny, a childlike trust or a reverent hope. "Thy will be done."

The morning hour,—it may come to be as natural and normal in the day's progress as the rising or the going to work or to rest. It is an old and well-tried way. The best of our forefathers, who resolutely worked out the noble characters from which we draw our best inheritance, put among their daily practices the regular time of private devotion. The habit was never more serviceable or more necessary than in our time of hurry and stress.

One must consult his individual needs and capacities. Not every one is the better physically for beginning the day with a cold plunge; and each may have his own way of taking hold of the guiding and compelling thoughts. When I write of the morning hour, I recall some people I have known who never could get fairly awake until the day was well begun. It happens, too, that several such whom I remember were among the best people I ever knew. Perhaps they slept so soundly because their consciences were clear; perhaps, being so good, they did not need this special exercise; or perhaps they took it at bedtime. If my reader is sleepy-headed in the morning, let him make account of the

Digitized by Google

fact in whichever of these ways he thinks best.

And now, the sympathetic reader — for sympathetic he must be if he has followed me thus far — will perhaps presently betake himself to the news and gossip of the day, — the politics, the athletics, the agreeable trifling, with which the tired brain relaxes itself as the pages of the Sunday newspapers are skimmed.[1] Then by and by will come the Sunday dinner and perchance the cigar, — may the dinner be savory, and the cigar be fragrant! And when he awakes on Monday morning, perhaps — perhaps — he will remember the sailor's daily observation of the sun.

[1] This chapter, as well as a number of the others, was originally printed in the *Springfield Sunday Republican*.

Digitized by Google

WHAT SUNDAY MAY BRING

No hour in the day is more beautiful than the early morning, and Sunday morning has a charm of its own. At this time of year [December] it is well worth while to wake early enough to take in the loveliness of the first sunlight stealing over the Connecticut Valley. The absence of the factory chimney smokes is grateful to the sight and to the imagination. The hush which replaces the familiar hum of the streets, the eloquent silence at the hour when the whistles are wont to blow, deepen the tranquillity which Nature seems to share with man. "Dear God! the very houses seem asleep!"

The "mystic chords" which vibrate in the heart stretch far back into humanity's past. "Sun-day" — it was the day given to the worship of that glorious luminary which early man accepted as the symbol worthiest of his reverence and the fittest emblem of Deity. To us there is the Christian association with the day, the resurrection, — the most beloved personality blending with the most thrilling hope. And back of this, lies the old Jewish Sabbath,

Digitized by Google

— day set apart for man's homeliest need, rest, and his highest attainment, worship. A day of rest, — that at least it is to all of us. Poor commonplace mortals, drudging along, and pausing in our drudgery, — half-humbled by the great words and lofty ideas held out to us, — we do at any rate get some let-up from work, some ease and repose, which makes us welcome the day, and sends us fresher to the week's work. If we only sleep later than usual, and lounge, and sun ourselves — that is something. If the teacher, with brain and nerves strung tense for six days past, lets go her grip, and allows the system to relax, and drops for a few hours to a healthy stupidity, — that may be a tonic and restorative. The business man who forgets for a while the responsibilities and anxieties that have followed him close, and idly turns the forty-eight pages of a Sunday paper, gets an escape from the chafing harness; a sponge wipes off the lines he has been scribbling and leaves the slate fresh. Good are these kinds of rest, — but there is something better.

Sunday brings leisure and opportunity for a generous partaking of certain fine things which on other days we get if at all only in hasty snatches. You remember the old woman who,

Digitized by Google

when she first saw the ocean, exclaimed, "For once in my life I've got enough of something!" Sunday offers in a way the "enough" to some human appetites which on other days are stinted; which properly denote a divine hunger, man's nobler nature asking to be fed; and if they be wholly denied, there comes a slow starvation.

Sunday we may call the key that opens certain lofty chambers of man's house. One chamber is a temple, which we name Worship. Yet worship is so large a word, covering as it does all upward look of the soul, that we may more specially name this particular chamber "The Church." See what at bottom means this Sunday service of the church. In every normal man there are deep and delicate outreachings toward some great reality, some lofty and satisfying way of life. These outreachings are for the most part shy and silent. We do not put them in words to each other; we do not know how, or we are diffident. Scarcely does child speak to parent, or wife to husband, of the questionings, the longings, the satisfactions, which lie deepest. But they have found articulate expression under the forms of religion.

Digitized by Google

Out from the heart of Nature rolled
The burdens of the Bible old;
The litanies of nations came
Like the volcano's tongue of flame,
Up from the fiery core below,
The canticles of love and woe.

So, in a true church service, one finds his best thoughts and aspirations and purposes made articulate for him; they are reinforced by the company of his fellow men and women worshiping about him; the heart is uplifted by hymn and prayer; some touch of prophetic speech gives guidance to the conscience and moves the will. Associations and memories touch subtle springs; the sculptured arch, the storied window, blend with the mood of the hour. Sometimes the sight of a child's rosy face nestling in its mother's lap, or the glimpse through a window of a waving bough, will come closer home than the preacher's word or the choir's chant.

But the church is only one of the chambers to which Sunday offers the key. Suppose we give the day a special use in the service of friendship. Friendship, of the rich and mellow kind, needs some atmosphere of leisure, and leisure is just what our hurrying week-day denies. Here are two men who habitually meet in busi-

Digitized by Google

ness relations only; they have common tastes and likings; each knows the other is a good fellow and would be glad to have him as chum and crony. But what chance for good comradeship while both are in the hurry-scurry of business — business, itself a sort of religion, whose deities are Hustle and Get-there? But of a Sunday, let us suppose, the two men come together for a leisurely hour or two, of which they do not count the minutes; they smoke their cigars on the piazza or in the den; they bar all words of bargain or profit, and let the free stream of talk run on things they care for and which are worth caring for. They may share something of each other's lives as they never would under week-day conditions. Sharing the life of another, — is n't that about as good a thing as there is? Think of the old friend at a distance, and the letter you might write him — an opening of yourself and your outer and inner life. Or, is there not some youngster of your acquaintance away from home, to whom Sunday is principally a day of homesickness, — is your home big enough and warm enough to take him in? Sunday is the day of the family. It is the time for the busy father and his young children to get acquainted.

Digitized by Google

Some happy pursuit together brightens the day — a ramble in the woods, an hour of music, an entertaining book read aloud, a frolic with the babies. Where the branches of a growing family have scattered yet lie near together, the Sunday dinner or the evening gathering may be a miniature Thanksgiving.

Our godly ancestors made Sunday a day of Bible reading. Why should we not take it not only for that older Bible, but for that larger scripture which has been written for us? Through the week we read newspapers, and perhaps novels, and perhaps the books of our profession or trade, and not much else. But on our bookshelves stand guides, prophets, comforters, inspirers, who will open their lips at our bidding. What better use for a Sunday hour than to listen closely and reverently to one of these? At one sitting Whittier will give us the heart of New England, — its family loves, its inmost traits, ensphered in the white wonder-world of winter. "Snowbound" gives us all. In a different mood we turn to Tennyson's "Two Voices," — the contest in the soul of faith and unfaith; the black whisper of despair; the doubts which we scarce dare put in words to ourselves, but which undermine our peace; the

Digitized by Google

answering affirmation of the "Everlasting Yea"; the keen debate; the emerging peace, solemn and tender as sunrise on a snowy mountain-peak. Who of us knows as well as he should the "In Memoriam,"—the wisest, noblest poem in the English language? One might well study it, a few stanzas each week, for months together. So we might take, Sunday after Sunday, the great poems of Emerson. In the midst of winter one may breathe the life of spring, its resurrection, its joy, its revelation of divinity, in "May Day." There is enough to glorify any Sunday, and to leave energizing and gladdening power for the week after, in "Monadnoc," "Wood Notes," "Threnody," or in the minor poems past naming.

If one does not care to soar so high, he can turn to those life-stories which are next to real lives in the pleasure and power they impart. On an old bookshelf one chances upon the biography of Horace Bushnell, by his daughter. It is the story of a saint and hero of our own day. Bushnell's books went far to remake the theology of his time, and they are still rich in life-building force. His *Moral Uses of Dark Things* is a gospel for the hard places. Phillips Brooks's Life is as inspiring as his sermons. Or

Digitized by Google

we can take a range below these spiritual exaltations. How many people know Benjamin Franklin's Autobiography? It is far and away beyond all the modern versions of his life in interest and charm. It is the story of the man in whom the American character first appeared as a new type, full of promise for the world. Few novels are as fascinating. Every American boy and young man ought to know it, and it would be good for their sisters, too. Good company? Why, here are libraries full of it.

But not church nor piazza nor library must shut in our Sunday; no, not even in winter, not even in rain or storm. It is a day for the outdoor world. It is a day for that full, deep draft from the cup of Mother Earth which is for most people scarcely possible through the week. Marvelously has New England changed from its Puritan notion that an indoor Sabbath was holy and an outdoor Sabbath profane. She never learned that from her arch-apostle John Calvin, who was found by John Knox, when he visited him in Geneva, playing bowls on the green, of a Sunday afternoon. But Scotland and half of England and all New England held grimly to a Sabbath of their own invention; a day more barren and joyless than the Jews ever

Digitized by Google

knew, and bound by restrictions such as Christ set aside, calling his followers to glad freedom and brotherly service. The first Christians, the Catholics, the early Reformers, all found it natural and easy to make a holy day and a holiday in one. But the over-seriousness of Puritanism concentrated itself on Sunday, till it became a day of bondage, and the superstition lasted long. Sixty years ago, in the early days of the *Springfield Republican*, correspondents debated in its columns whether the village cemetery should be opened to visitors on Sunday; the liberals defending it, because people went there to weep and mourn, while the conservatives declared it was as bad to walk for pleasure in the cemetery on that day as in Court Square or on Main street. For the change of times, witness the cheerful crowds that throng Forest Park, the full cars on all the country roads, the neighborly groups on city lawns and in rural door-yards.

The full enjoyment of Nature needs some amplitude of time and something either of solitude or of only congenial society. There should be an hour or two in which the familiar environment is gradually left behind, in the inner as well as the outer man, and the mind grows free

Digitized by Google

and open and sensitive to the magic touch. The trolley serves best when it takes one to the starting-point for a walk. A carriage drive is good for those who can take it. An automobile is better than nothing! The bicycle is a grand resource; a spin of a few miles tones up the whole system, and when the rider stops occasionally for leisurely observation, the invigorated frame is keenly sensitive to all that speaks through the senses. The earth's face has its aspect of special attraction and significance for each day and hour. The other day — it was in early September — as one passed through the streets of the town, the season had a slightly dingy and shopworn look; the foliage appeared rusty; it seemed that summer had worn itself out and autumn was still in the distance. But emerging into the open country, there was the distinct and special beauty of the day; unlike yesterday, unlike to-morrow; the greens and browns and reds and yellows of the fields wove themselves into a rug such as no Persian loom could rival; the woods were rich and somber; the clouds hung dark and grand; the crickets were chirping in full chorus; the very sobriety of the scene was "a melancholy better than all mirth."

Digitized by Google

If my neighbor prefers to take *his* stroll with a golf-club in his hand, a ball to entice him on, and comrades to share the pursuit; or if my neighbor's boy finds he cannot devote the entire day to spiritual exercises, and hungers for baseball, — I do not know why people of different taste should disapprove, still less why they should forbid.

The church, friendship, the family, books, the outdoor world, — there is yet an inner chamber to be visited; it is that in which one sits alone and takes thoughtful survey of life. When the familiar occupations are left behind; when leisure and calm have cleared the mental air; when freshness after repose, or the associations of the day, or inspiring words. or uplifting music, or the face of earth and sky, have brought us to our better self, — then it is good to look at some things in us and about us which we are apt to view from a lower standpoint. Your relations with that man, for example; he is habitually an exasperation to you; he obstructs, thwarts, irritates you. Can you not in this quiet hour view him in a different light? He has his good qualities? — oh, yes, you know that; well, dwell on them a little with some such brooding as you have often given to his faults.

Digitized by Google

He has his own troubles? — yes, plenty of them; then imagine a little of the smart and pain of them and grow pitiful. He has friends, a wife, children, by whom he is loved? — yes; try then to see the man in him whom they see and love. Strive to realize in his case that saying of Orville Dewey: "There is nothing to do with men but to love them; to contemplate their virtues with admiration, their faults with pity and forbearance, and their injuries with forgiveness."

Or, again, call up from your recollections of yesterday, from the recesses of your inner consciousness, that fault in which you indulge while almost concealing it from yourself. That ungoverned appetite or temper which grows in the dark, which perhaps no eye sees, which may take yet no form in act but is corroding some corner of your nature, — face it now, bring it to light, see it in all its hideousness. See it, and shudder at it, and pledge yourself and pray that its dominion over you may cease.

Let your thought move lingeringly about the circle of your friends — in the seen and unseen worlds. As a man looks around a rich portrait gallery, studying and admiring, so do you study and ponder and delight in the human souls that have disclosed to you something of

Digitized by Google

their beauty, their upward growth, their love and tenderness. Here you are in the real world. Here are spirits, kindred to you, ensphered in one destiny with you, above you in this virtue and in that grace, dependent on you for help and sympathy, — take a full sense of these, for they mean more to you than anything else.

Can we call such ponderings self-communion? Rather, they bring us into communion with that great whole of which the personal self is but one atom. In the clearer perception of such hours, the better impulse, the larger consciousness, do we not hear a voice and discern a presence which is the highest our souls can know? We may begin to understand, and even to make our own, in all humility, the words of Emerson: "I recognize the distinction of the outer and inner self; the double consciousness that within this erring, passionate, mortal self sits a supreme, calm, immortal mind, whose powers I do not know, but it is stronger than I; it is wiser than I; it never approved me in any wrong; I seek counsel of it in my doubts; I repair to it in my danger; I pray to it in my undertakings. It seems to me the face which the Creator uncovers to his child."

Nature, scripture, worship, love, communion,

Digitized by Google

— these are the gifts which Sunday offers. They are not forced upon us. We can make of the day what we will; can prolong our morning drowsiness to the last moment; can dawdle away the forenoon over the newspapers; can make dinner the principal event; can frivol and bore ourselves and other people, or make the day a waste-basket for the week's odds and ends. Or, we can mould it to the use that for us is best; we can fashion a habit and sequence for its hours, giving the fit time to solitude and to society, to worship in whatever way has for us most reality, to relaxation pure and simple as we need it.

As the patient listener to a homily sometimes feels himself rewarded by the hymn that follows, so now the reader may welcome William C. Gannett's "Sunday on the Hilltop": —

Only ten miles from the city, —
And how I am lifted away
To the peace that passeth knowing,
And the light that is not of day!

All alone on the hilltop!
Nothing but God and me,
And the spring-time's resurrection,
Far murmurings of the sea.

The river's laugh in the valley,
Hills dreaming of their past;
And all things silently opening,
Opening into the Vast!

Digitized by Google

Eternities past and future
  Seem clinging to all I see,
And things immortal cluster
  About my bended knee.

This pebble — is older than Adam,
  Secrets it hath to tell!
These rocks — they cry out history,
  Could I but listen well.

This pool knows the ocean-feeling
  Of storm and moon-led tide,
The sun finds its East and West therein,
  And the stars find room to glide.

This lichen's crinkled circle
  Still creeps with the Life Divine,
Where the Holy Spirit loitered
  On its way to this face of mine, —

On its way to the shining faces
  Where angel-lives are led,
And I am the lichen's circle
  That creeps with tiny tread.

I can hear these violets chorus
  To the sky's benediction above —
And we all are together lying
  On the bosom of Infinite Love.

I — I am a part of the poem,
  Of its every sight and sound,
For my heart beats inward rhymings
  To the Sabbath that lies around.

Oh, the peace at the heart of Nature!
  Oh, the light that is not of day!
Why seek it afar forever,
  When it cannot be lifted away!

Digitized by Google

THE TAP ON THE SHOULDER

How is a man to putter with pen and ink when Lady Earth is making love to him? One dazzling whiteness covers all. So shines the splendor of Mont Blanc when it breaks on the traveler's sight. The sun has powdered the world with diamond dust. Down from the north pours the river of air, filling the frame with energy and the heart with courage. Man's response to Nature's beauty is action. To match her glorious show, he sets his hardihood and achievement, and the accord between them makes the symphony of the universe.

The poet or artist gives himself up entranced to a scene like this. For a few moments in the day we are all artists and poets. Every pulse quickens when first the eye falls on the trees in their fresh robes, and the light snow-clouds dancing from the boughs at the touch of the wind. Then, each to his place, and the farmer is breaking the road, the Italian's stout arms are swinging the snow-shovel, the boy is shooting down the long coast with a hurrah, the chickadee is practicing his "phoebe" note, the crow is

Digitized by Google

cawing his welcome to the northing sun, — we are all stirring if not useful, and vocal if not tuneful!

The different music which the same touch draws from different instruments is shown in the last act of *The Merchant of Venice.* That moonlight night which Shakespeare has made immortal sets young Lorenzo and Jessica to pretty conceits amid their caresses — moonlight and love make them poets for the hour. Then in rushes the merry clown Launcelot; his brain too the moon has touched, but his song is a roistering shout, "Sola, sola, wo ha!" At which Lorenzo and Jessica wince, but Shakespeare smiles. And the true-hearted Portia meanwhile

> doth stray about
> By holy crosses, where she kneels and prays
> For happy wedlock hours.

All this is but a digression, a twitching aside of the pen from its path by the goddess looking over the shoulder. The real theme of discourse is drawn from a man's reminiscence of his early life. "I visited the Hampton School," he said, "along with Charles L. Brace, the founder of the Children's Aid Society in New York, and I saw those two heroes together, Brace and Gen-

Digitized by Google

eral Armstrong. If either of them had tapped me on the shoulder and said, 'Come,' how gladly I would have followed!" One was leading in the regeneration of a race. The true enfranchisement of the negroes — the making men of them, not as a legal form, but in substance and reality — dates from Armstrong and Hampton. The other leader had put character, culture, all the resources of an ample manhood, at the service of the poor children in cities; he gave homes to the homeless by the thousand and ten thousand; he was one of the foremost in the rescue of the "submerged tenth." What youth of generous spirit but would have welcomed a call to follow such chiefs as those!

It was with a touch of regret that the recollection was told. Yet in the hearer that regret found no echo. For he knew his man, and knew that he had followed the call of duty just as faithfully as if he had gone with Brace or Armstrong. All his life he has been strengthening the weak, cheering the faint-hearted, showing the truth of religion and the beauty of holiness not only with his lips but in his life. There will always be in him a little unsatisfied hankering after martyrdom, but the world needs not only

Digitized by Google

men to die for the good cause, but men to show in themselves the possible strength and joy of living.

"Bishop, what is the true Church?" was the eager question asked by a zealous young Episcopalian of dear old Bishop Smith of Kentucky. "My child," he answered her, "it is what the Prayerbook calls 'the blessed company of all faithful people.'" It is the men and women who turn and follow when they feel the tap on the shoulder and hear the summoning voice. It is a matter not of responding once, by a single grand self-surrender, but of answering a thousand times, and often when the imps of self-indulgence and revolt are tugging the other way.

The *Life of Gladstone* which John Morley has written — a noble book about a noble man — shows this quality constantly. Nothing more marks Gladstone with the seal of greatness than the constant readiness to follow where the light may lead, though it be at the cost of taste, interest, friendship, success. His first call to high office came as a distinct disappointment. In his brilliant early years he was a loyal follower of Sir Robert Peel, and when Peel made up his administration Gladstone had good rea-

Digitized by Google

son to hope for a seat in the Cabinet, and some office congenial to his taste, such as Secretary for the Colonies. Instead he was offered only the Vice-Presidency of the Board of Trade, a position which did not include a place in the Cabinet, and was concerned with details of mercantile affairs, quite foreign to Gladstone's interests. But he accepted it cheerfully, expressing his willingness to serve his chief wherever he was needed. The faithful attention to that drudgery went far to equip him for the great finance minister he afterward became. In the midst of his public duties there fell a crisis in the affairs of his wife's family. Her brother had become financially involved, to the peril of his solvency and the ownership of the estate around Hawarden Castle, in which centered the family position so dear to Englishmen. There was no one so able to cope with the financial tangle as Gladstone; so he shouldered the load, busied himself for years with the details of the snarl, subordinated often the public concerns in which his heart and ambition were engaged, and at last brought order out of chaos and set his brother-in-law as the unincumbered master of Hawarden. Sometimes the story-book ending does happen, and at last

Digitized by Google

Hawarden passed unexpectedly to Gladstone and his children, while the business experience proved another equipment for him as a great Chancellor of the Exchequer.

A more moving story: He traveled in 1850 in Italy, and happened to be in Naples when the wicked old Bourbon king was sending the patriots by hundreds to rot in dungeons. Gladstone went to the trials; saw the travesty of justice; and heard the statesman Poerio, who had been a king's minister, sentenced with many of his companions to twenty-four years' imprisonment. They were chained each to a common felon; fed on foul soup; confined in cells with such air that when, half-dead, they were allowed a physician, they crawled up the stairs because the doctors would not risk themselves in the prison atmosphere. There Gladstone visited Poerio. They consulted whether it would be better to seek help by diplomatic measures, or by publishing the story to the world. The latter, Gladstone feared, might bring fresh hardships on the prisoners. "Never mind us," said Poerio, "think of Italy." Gladstone went home, tried in vain the slow and heartless machinery of the Foreign Office, and then told the whole in burning words that

Digitized by Google

stirred England and Europe to grief and wrath. But the prisoners' captivity was made more rigorous. For them, what summons of duty, what possibility of service? Poerio took for his motto, "To suffer is to act,"—and held to it while the long years went on.

Another hero was finding a way or making one. Cavour, prime minister of Victor Emmanuel, was building up the little state of Sardinia to be the leader of a free Italy. He made treaties of commerce, and nourished all the resources of the state. When England and France joined hands against Russia, little Sardinia marched with them, won a voice in the settlement when the fighting was over, and gained the ear of Europe when Cavour told of Italy's wrongs. Presently he took a quiet journey, fell in as if by accident with Louis Napoleon, and threw all the force and charm of his personality to win the emperor,—and not in vain. And still the years went on, and still Poerio and his companions lay in their dungeons, fettered to ruffians, getting only a rare whisper of what the world was doing; and still they held up their hearts,—"To suffer is to act." Europe did not forget them, Italy treasured them in her heart, the tyrant on the throne remembered them and

Digitized by Google

feared. He saw at last the handwriting on the wall, and sought to appease the rising storm. Poerio and others were brought up to the light of day; they were shipped to America to "perpetual banishment." They prevailed on the captain to land them on English soil, and then after nine years Poerio spoke again to Gladstone. The hour had come; France and Sardinia threw themselves against Austria and drove her back; and now Garibaldi and his red shirts are storming Naples, the king has fled, Italy is free!

The heroes of every nation are made of the same material. Homely fidelity is the warp and woof of the stuff that storm-staysails are made of. Our own Washington, set though he is in a kind of remote sublimity by the magnitude of his service and the popular imagination, was at the bottom just a first-class man of business, with the thoroughness, attention, punctuality, that make success in practical affairs; and with this a patience hammered hard on many an anvil, and a magnanimity which grew as he lived constantly in the service of the community. To get near the man, go to the volumes of his correspondence during the war. It is one series of perplexities, disasters, disappoint-

Digitized by Google

ments, — these, and a man to wring victory out of them. Now the army is without powder; now the discharged soldiers are going home and no new levies appearing; now Congress is making a mess of its business; now there is lukewarmness at the South and cupidity at the North. His troops must fall back, mile after mile, day after day; months pass before he can strike, and when at last he strikes, — the British win. Again and again he loses, at Long Island, Germantown, Brandywine; a rare gleam of victory at Trenton and Princeton. When a really great triumph comes at Saratoga, Fortune sends it to the braggart Gates, who straightway begins a cabal to supplant Washington. He faces it all, masters it all, makes no complaint: "More powder, quartermaster; more recruits, governor; do your best for us, gentlemen of Congress; steady, you militiamen! You never fail me, my brave Greene, Knox, Wayne, Schuyler, Lafayette; stand firm, friends all, and heaven will right our cause." So it goes for six years; then Cornwallis makes a false move and exposes his army; down swoops the watchful chief from the North like an eagle, and holds his prey in unrelaxing grasp; Yorktown surrenders, America is a nation.

Digitized by Google

And there was Lincoln, — a story too great to be dwelt on here. Always he advanced by the next step, uncertain of to-morrow, but never missing to-day. Of him it was said, "God covered his eyes with one hand and led him with the other." He put his own biography into a sentence when he wrote: "With firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right."

History must needs deal with the conspicuous figures, but the same forces that shape the Alps and the Rockies and guide the Mississippi and the Amazon are moulding the hillocks at our doors and steering the rivulets in which our snows trickle down. The summoning touch, the warning and the inviting voice, are coming always to men and women and little children. A petticoated four-year-old boy, crossing a field and going to pick a rhodora, saw a little spotted tortoise sunning itself, and lifted a stick to strike it, when something within him checked him, saying clear and loud, "It is wrong!" He stood in wonder till rhodora and tortoise vanished from his sight, then hastened home to ask his mother what it all meant. She took him in her arms and told him, "Some men call it conscience, but I prefer to call it the voice of God in the soul of man."

Digitized by Google

The boy grew up stout in courage and tender of heart; he fought all falsehoods and wrongs; always he was one "to crush the snake and spare the worm." That boy and man was Theodore Parker.

A famous school of theology had a requirement that all of its teachers should subscribe every five years to an ancient cast-iron creed, of which, in these latter days, no mother's son of them believed a half. It long passed unnoticed as a mere form, till at last, the question was loudly asked: "Why do you, teachers of truth, profess what you do not believe?" Oh, there were excellent reasons, most ingenious defenses! But one of the teachers quietly said: "I have hitherto done it thoughtlessly, and I will not do it again," and resigned his professorship. To one who congratulated him on the act, he said: "My only regret is that I do not like to seem by my course to censure my colleagues, who I am sure are doing what they think is right." He at least was obedient to the call, — first of sincerity, and then of charity.

It is the little things, the daily routine, the unexpected trifles, which test and train. Especially it is the interruptions, the diversions from the work we have planned or the ideals we are

Digitized by Google

following, which are really our disguised opportunities. "I remember," said a minister, "I was writing a sermon about how men ought to be helpful in the household, and in the midst of it I was annoyed by my wife's asking me to bring a pail of water." The wives, — the sisters and daughters, too, — their life is made up in good part of necessary routine and drudgery (if we call it so) and partly of meeting demands from husband, children, servants, neighbors, which prevent large and showy achievement. "A man's work's from sun to sun; a woman's work's never done." Insignificant details, — dish-washing, floor-sweeping, clothes-mending, picking up things that men have dropped, management of servants, endless looking after children; but done willingly, graciously, what a net result, — a character that outblooms the flowers and outshines the stars. The household work of a servant gives the image for man's highest relation: "As the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress, so our eyes wait upon the Lord our God."

Sometimes the demand for womanly sacrifice centers itself in a crisis. She has trained her-

Digitized by Google

self for a special work; for it she has saved and stinted; has studied and toiled; has seen new horizons of knowledge opening, and gone gladly onward; achievement is just before her — when she meets the man! So she takes love as her portion; and for a while she hopes that love and achievement can go hand in hand. But by degrees it comes to her that her husband's possibilities are greater than hers or his ambition stronger; he needs her ministries, and cannot help her in a career of her own; must she merge herself in his career? Her pillow is wet with tears at midnight. That anguish may be the birth-pang of a higher life.

We all like to have the summons come to us embodied in the touch of a hero, or the voice of a lover. Men are glad to follow a chief, — a Grant or Wellington or Napoleon. Deity seems to come near when it is enshrined in a human form. Millions have found strength and joy in the sense of a living relation with Christ, — their fidelity to him and his love for them. Wrote a Hindu to his American friends after his return home: "Our voyage was stormy, but I was at peace. Christ was with me, and Buddha was with me, and what had I to fear?" Many a soul owns as its real guide and leader

Digitized by Google

some beloved human spirit, in the seen or the unseen world. In truth it is one message that is spoken by these different voices, and one spirit that speaks through them all. What matters it to the soldier whether it is the commander-in-chief or the sergeant that gives him his orders?

The voice speaks not alone in command. Its word is of cheer, of joy, of love. Every sunrise greets us: "Take as a divine gift this new day." The north wind is a gallant wooer, and the sparkle of the snow crystal is a smile.

Digitized by Google

IN RETURN FOR WEDDING CARDS

FINDING myself unable, my dear John and Jenny, to be with you on the happy occasion, I send you the best substitute I am able for my personal presence. I should like to send you some solid and material contribution to your pleasure; say, a fine horse and buggy, with stable-bill paid three years in advance, to cover board, shoeing, and veterinary. Or a snug package of United States bonds would serve the purpose. But as circumstances are against this form of salutation, I must needs confine myself to the offering of a few remarks. They may not prove to be — as Wordsworth said to Channing of one of his own poems — "a series of valooable sentiments — extremely valooable!" — but such as I have give I ye. I address myself especially to you, my dear John, because I'm a man myself; but I know Jenny will read this over your shoulder, or at the farthest within a few hours; and I shall digress occasionally for her especial benefit.

To a young man about to take the same step you are taking, an elderly friend once said:

Digitized by Google

"Remember, you don't know at all the woman you are going to marry." As addressed to yourself, that observation would no doubt seem to you very cynical and wholly untrue. Modify it a little, and put it, "You have but just begun to know her," and see whether it is not so. Turn the case round: has she more than begun to know you? Of all that has made up your past, — its occupations, companions, successes, failures, — how much does she know? Of what you are to-day, — traits, habits, tastes, the various sides you show to your friends, rivals, foes; the beginnings and possibilities of good and evil in you, — how much has she seen? Quite a margin, you see, of unexplored country. And the like limitations apply to your knowledge of her. The truth is, you have both, if you take things rightly, just entered on the lifelong business of getting acquainted. A wonderful business, — full of interest and unexpectedness, plentiful in employment for the best stuff in you both, with possibilities of happiness and attainment beyond your power to imagine.

By way of beginning, dwell a little on what you owe to Jenny in the way of taking in her life outside of your immediate personal relation

Digitized by Google

with her. You being a true lover, and she a true woman, she has placed you under an immeasurable debt by giving herself to you. She has taken you as her principal business henceforward, your happiness her first aim, your company her chief pleasure, your needs and interests the guiding rule of her life. That you know and feel, and you purpose with all your heart to make the best return that is in you. Love, care, protection, sympathy — these you need no one to preach to you, so far as your general feeling and intention go. Now you need specifically to understand and share and allow for those elements of character and experience which are peculiarly her own. She has a father and mother, brothers and sisters, a circle of girl friends, who till she met you a year or two ago were her best possessions, and who still are dear to her. You need to make them all your friends too; to listen when she talks about them, to see that she still has something of their society, to win them to like you. She has her special tastes, which you share, if at all, in a less degree; she can listen to good music, entranced, for an evening, while you get your fill in half an hour. She has her own pretty little gift of music or of painting, which has yielded enjoy-

Digitized by Google

ment to herself and to others, but the plant will soon wither if it has not the sunshine of your encouragement. You can cultivate a genuine sympathy with these tastes of hers, and so make yourself richer and her happier.

And you want to watch closely and reverently her traits of character. You stand in presence of one of the most beautiful and wonderful things on earth, — a human soul, a woman's soul, ripened by years of faithful living; a soul which your presence by some miracle has stimulated to put forth its fairest blossoms and sweetest fruits; and which will open its inner depths, as you approach in reverence and tenderness. In studying that marvel there will be for you a lifelong delight. You will see some faults — probably; I have known one or two faultless people, but these are scarce. You will see from what they spring; will recognize the physical infirmity or stress of circumstance that occasions them, and learn that "to understand is to forgive." Your own shortcomings will show large in the comparison, and prompt you to generous allowance. And you will see how the mutual help to rise is one strand in the sacred bond that unites you. The first rapture of surprise may pass, the glamour yield to

Digitized by Google

soberer hues; but the reality as it slowly grows on you will be better than the first promise — "because God's gifts put man's best dreams to shame." In homely household service, in the graceful bubbling outplay of a happy heart, in new relations as they come, under disaster, in great emergencies, in the peace of mellowing years, — you will find in this companion soul a revelation beyond all words.

Speaking as between you and me, John, — both of us being men, as I have remarked, — it is my impression that women are better than we are. In some ways we are stronger, and in some ways we are wiser, but for right-down goodness I think they beat us. They are purer, and they are more unselfish. This is a personal impression, but there is pretty good witness for it. Shakespeare gives half a dozen women who are nearly perfect, — Imogen, Miranda, Cordelia, Desdemona, Rosalind, the Portias (Bassanio's and Brutus's), — while scarcely a masculine hero but is deeply flawed. Goethe, after he had gone through the widest range of experience, ends his *Faust* with: —

> The woman-soul leadeth us upward and on.

And Lowell takes that "woman-soul" ("Das

Digitized by Google

Ewig-Weibliche"), as the title of one of his most revealing poems: —

> And when she came, how earned I such a gift?
> Why spend on me, a poor earth-delving mole,
> The fireside sweetnesses, the heavenward lift,
> The hourly mercy, of a woman's soul?

On your marriage-day, John, it is a woman's soul that is given into your hands. See that you deal with it with utmost reverence.

And now, my dear Jenny, has John confided to you all these lucubrations, including the give-away of our sex as compared with yours? If he has, you have appropriated to yourself whatever of like monition belongs to you, or have drawn your own swift conclusion. A word as to your special part in sharing his individual interests. The poets have said the gist of all these things. So Tennyson in *The Princess* speaks of the growing adaptation of man and wife: —

> In the long years liker must they grow;
> The man be more of woman, she of man;
> He gain in sweetness and in moral height,
> Nor lose the wrestling thews that throw the world;
> She mental breadth, nor fail in childward care,
> Nor lose the childlike in the larger mind;
> Till at the last she set herself to man,
> Like perfect music unto noble words.

Digitized by Google

"Mental breadth" — that in some fashion marriage does teach even to the dullest pupils. There is broadening, such as no other experience gives, in the disclosure to the husband of the woman-nature and to the wife of the man-nature. They are the two hemispheres of humanity, and there is no learning the geography but by making the voyage.

But also the "mental breadth" comes by cultivation, by reaching out each into the other's interests. Your John holds a good position in the Perpetual Life Insurance Company. When he went to work there his chief said to him: "The first necessity for you is to believe that life insurance is the greatest thing in the world; and the next is to believe that the Perpetual is the greatest company in the world." John loyally followed the order, and he is a genuine enthusiast for life insurance and the Perpetual. You want to share his enthusiasm, to encourage him to talk about his business to you, and to make a partnership with him in it; just as he will make a partnership with you about your cook and kitchen, your music and painting, your family and friends. And each of you will acquire the instinct which discerns when to talk out the trouble in the kitchen or

Digitized by Google

the worry at the office, and get comfort, and when to suppress it, and give peace and rest.

The finer tastes of both should go into the common stock. John is pretty well up in history, and Jenny knows a good deal of poetry; "pool your issues," and share the historians and the poets. Jenny is fond of backgammon and John is fond of cribbage; well, they both are capital games, and may well be played in turn. Coming to a larger matter: Jenny is a member of the — is it the Christadelphian Church, or the Comeouters? — I forget which, but of one church or the other she is a faithful attendant, and gets much happiness and help thereby. But John, though he has the root of the matter in him, as to character and as to what I call religion, finds of late years that church-going brings him no edification, and practices it but rarely — at least until it had the attraction of the one companion. And here, my dear young people, you are on delicate ground; which yet will prove very firm and supporting ground if you walk in mutual love and sincerity. Nobody can tell you in advance what will be the best course of action; you must find out for yourselves. But you want first to understand one another, as to your in-

Digitized by Google

most thoughts about what is your ideal, your purpose and hope; and in what ways you find most help. Then you have just to be faithful each to the personal light, and reverent of each other's light. Church-going is but a detail, and will adjust itself. It may perhaps be well for John to give a fair trial to the church, and see if the Christadelphian liturgy, or the Come-outer's preaching, — helped by his wife's interpretation and sympathy, — does not do him good. Or, it may come to Jenny to understand that there are other ways of Sunday observance which to John are more refreshing and profitable. Each case finds its own solution. I knew of one marriage where the wife, a devout Catholic, bound herself by the firmest resolution not by any word or act to try to win her Protestant husband to her church. She kept her resolution, and the habitual sight of her character and religion so attracted him that of his own accord he joined the Catholic Church, and they were happy together there. However it may fare with you outwardly, my dear couple, you already, being such lovers as I know you to be, possess the inner secret of religion. "For every one that loveth is born of God and knoweth God."

Digitized by Google

One word of practical counsel — take time enough for each other. Don't let business or care or study or pleasure or any earthly interest so absorb you that you come together at the day's end too weary and fagged to give each other anything but the dregs. There is no high success in anything unless we often come to it with a fresh, buoyant, unjaded spirit. Don't treat your marriage relation with less respect than the writing of a sermon or the winning of an election. What profits it to you, John, if you rise to be president of the Perpetual, if as the price you spend all your days in such a "demnition grind" that Jenny never sees you except as a fagged, drained, empty husk of a man? Have leisure, have holidays, have frequent freshness of body and spirit. Not easy, perhaps, but put it among your "must-haves." Our "must-haves," you know, we can generally get, if we choose them rightly.

This preachment started from a somewhat grim text, implying that you, John and Jenny, do not at present know each other at all, or only as a beginning. Yet there is a sense in which you each know the other better than any one else does. You remember the delightful

Digitized by Google

passage in *The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table*, about the three Johns and three Thomases: Whenever two people meet, says Holmes, at least six persons are present. There is the real John, known only to his Maker; John's idea of himself, quite a different character; and Thomas's idea of John, unlike either of the others. Likewise there are the real Thomas, Thomas's Thomas, and John's Thomas. You can easily transfer the statement to John and Jenny. But here comes in something besides. Mrs. Stowe expresses it finely in *The Minister's Wooing*, where Mary Scudder, the heavenly-minded heroine, is in love with the undeveloped, reckless sailor, James Marvyn. What she loved in him, says the author, was not what the world saw and what in a way he was, but the hidden nobler self, the man God meant him to be, the man he might one day, if led by his and Mary's mutual love, come to be in reality. Take that to yourselves, my dear children. Do you know, John, that in Jenny's eyes you are a hero, an embodiment of manly nobility and strength? And do you know — yes, I need not ask — you do know well what unheroic stuff there is in you; how sadly you have stumbled, how weak you are before some temptations. What

Digitized by Google

explains the difference? It is partly that you have thus far shown her only your best side, and partly that she divines your highest possibilities, and sees you as if they were already fulfilled.

> God be thanked, the meanest of his creatures
> Boasts two soul-sides, — one to face the world with,
> One to show a woman when he loves her.

Take humbly the honor given you, a woman's idealizing affection; and set yourself the lifelong task to grow worthy of it. And you, Jenny, you are to John the woman-soul; he sees in you what painters have put into their Madonnas, what poets have sung. It is your part to grow toward that. This is the twofold, the lifelong, the happy part assigned to you each; to see the other's ideal self, to watch its growth, and give to it the sunshine to make it grow; and gradually to realize in yourself all that those loving eyes see in you.

This series of sentiments — "valooable" or otherwise — is stretching out till I fear the printer's frown. So I withhold some reflections as to those unmarried ones who by a wonderful spiritual law attain the wisdom and the beauty which seem the special fruit of marriage and parenthood; the single women, en-

Digitized by Google

titled to brevet rank as wives and mothers; the unmarried men, with the souls of lovers and fathers; men like Phillips Brooks, and the Master he followed. This, my dear young folks, I leave you to think out for yourselves.

Digitized by Google

ON FINDING ONE'S WAY

To find your way is not difficult if you know the lay of the land — the lay of it and the way of it. The heart of the Maine woods is a bewildering place to a stranger, but the woodsman sees guideposts all about him — in the position of the sun, the direction of the streams, the growth of the tree-moss, and a hundred signs. Now put the woodsman in the streets of Boston, and he is all astray, or would be but for the human guideposts, to whose friendliness and intelligence he can appeal.

The labyrinth of Boston streets — it deserves a chapter by itself. There is a plausible theory that here lies the explanation of the mental and moral superiority of the Boston people. They have been so constantly called on to exercise their brains and their benevolence in directing puzzled strangers that their wits have grown keen and their philanthropy constant. It worked that way while Boston lay in a single stratum, but now that the Subway below and the Elevated above have made the city a three-decker, the necessary direc-

Digitized by Google

tions are so complicated that the native intelligence outruns all former attainment; but the hapless traveler can scarcely follow it. Thus, if you are in the Catacomb Gardens, and want to get to the North-Northwest Station, you have only to ask the first person you meet, — swell, scholar, or tramp, — and he will ponder a moment and tell you: "There are several routes, but I think your best way will be this: Follow this path to Crosscut Corner; then take the right-hand turn, then the second left, and you will come to Alphabet Avenue; take a green car with a red stripe (be sure of the red stripe), and it will take you to the Subway; change at Park Street to the Elevated going north (be careful not to get the southward one), and it will carry you direct to the North-Northwest Station." If the inquirer is wise, he holds fast to the first name he hears and lets all the rest go by: "Crosscut Corner!" he repeats to himself; and, arrived so far, he asks again, again remembers the first name and forgets all the rest, and so in due time arrives at North-Northwest Station.

Does the reader fear that he will never get to his present destination? Let him take courage. The next point to observe is, that while

Digitized by Google

knowing the way and following it are in theory quite distinct, yet in practice we learn by going; knowledge and action help each other. The step acquired first by diligent attention becomes through practice so easy that the process is unconscious. The novice on the bicycle is told by the instructor how to balance himself: "Whichever way you begin to fall, pull the handle-bar on that side." So with every lunge one way or the other, he hurriedly tells himself, "I'm tumbling to the right, — I must pull the right handle," and suits the action to the thought; then the same with the left, — until he has staggered along for a few rods, and finally comes to the ground. In his early practice his brain gets tired before his legs do. But after a few weeks of it he sways and balances so easily that he can hardly tell how he does it. Just so, when you walk; you are really doing a very nice and delicate piece of balancing, but you learned it so early and so thoroughly that the muscles act instinctively and without your consciousness: the balancing "does itself."

"The bearing of these remarks," in the words of Captain Jack Bunsby," lies in the application of 'em." Our guidance in the higher conduct of life, our best resource in its problems, is

Digitized by Google

found in a habit of close attention which produces a sure and almost unconscious instinct of right carriage. The woodsman is at home in the forest because he has lived there, and has fitted himself every hour to his surroundings. So, one lives among men and women, and either by set purpose or by drifting he has one general attitude toward them; and this attitude determines his inner world. Perhaps he looks on them as instruments and occasions for his gratification, and bears himself accordingly. Or he is fastidious and sensitive, ready to wince at every jar to his comfort or self-love, and then his attitude is self-protection and his inner world one of isolation. Or he may have the ruling purpose to help others, to live as a brother in the family, a member of the common body; and then his world is one of true society.

Now it is the man with this social aim and spirit that we are considering, and this man learns his way by close attention, ripening into instinct. You wonder how some woman always does the right thing and says the right word; how her mere presence brings soothing and strength. It is because she is so constantly thinking of the people about her — whomever she happens to be thrown with — that she dis-

Digitized by Google

covers what they want almost as quickly and surely as one knows what he wants for himself. You and I, my friend, have a pretty clear notion of what we at the moment desire, have n't we? If we are hungry or thirsty, if we are tired and want a holiday, if we long for a little hand-clapping for that smart performance of ours — we know what we want. Well, this Lady Helpful finds out by her quick sympathy what the person next her wants; she finds it out because she is interested; and in her the impulse to supply the neighbor's want is as natural as the impulse in you or me to drink when we are thirsty.

We all are skillful in the things we care most for. Did you ever watch Puss stealing through the bushes on her prey, and mark how noiselessly she goes? Did you ever see her prowling surreptitiously on a breakfast table, and observe how deftly she steers clear of the glass and china? That is tact. And just so the person who wants to give happiness steers by fine instinct among human feelings, which are more fragile than glass and china, and avoids that one's prejudices, and soothes this one's pain, and makes an atmosphere of tranquillity and cheer.

Digitized by Google

There are many problems which are quite insoluble by general principles, but which are safely determined, as occasions arise, by the instincts of a nature highly trained in noble dispositions.

In critical moments the great soul acts, and its act hits the mark. In war, the soldier must often retreat when he is outnumbered, but sometimes he must sacrifice himself, and no text-book of strategy can tell him how to choose; the hero's heart must guide him. The three hundred Spartans accepted death at Thermopylæ, and they are forever honored. The Army of Northern Virginia surrendered at Appomattox, but they will live in history as heroes without blame. The arbiter was in the breast of Leonidas, in the breast of Lee.

The conduct of life is like the sailing of a ship. The captain puts out from New York, bound for Liverpool, three thousand miles away. For guidance he has his compass and his charts, his daily observation of the sun, and the log by which he measures his speed. For driving power he has the winds, and his chief business is to trim his sails to the winds as they vary. He starts with a fair wind, and he sets his sails square to catch it. Then the wind creeps round

Digitized by Google

to the quarter, and he trims his sails and keeps right on his course. Then with a sudden shift the wind comes dead ahead; but he braces his yards sharp, and still forges ahead; then he tacks, and still creeps forward by a slow zigzag. Now it rises to a gale, and wind and sea are too strong to oppose; the good ship swings deftly around across the huge rollers, and flies before the blast, — straight away from her port. No matter, her turn will come! And presently, as the gale abates and shifts, round she comes again, and once more is working ahead. The sun is hidden at noon, but the skipper studies the story of his log, computes and measures on his charts, and knows about where he is. On, on, served by all winds, enduring all weathers, — till the light beckons from the shore; till with morning the green hills invite, and soon the appointed harbor welcomes.

So, man chooses his port — let him see that he choose well — and sets sail. Overhead shine the great spiritual laws to guide him. In his breast he carries his compass, his sense of right and wrong; and the charts, the wisdom gathered and stored by his ancestors. He notes the way he is going, carries his own experience in memory, and when the heavenly vision is dim,

Digitized by Google

he yet can judge well where he is and lay his course rightly. And the winds, — they are the outward events, the social forces, the happenings adverse or opportune, the whole vast volume of circumstance. It is his part to make circumstance his servant; to trim his sails to every shift of fortune, so that always he is making headway, always is working toward his port.

And what port is he seeking? Every thoughtful man has some destination in view, some controlling aim. What is that secret thought and dearest purpose? To the idealist, it is some grand consummation; the patriot seeks his country's regeneration; another looks to the emancipation of the poor; the prophet sees in imagination the whole human race in a noble and happy estate. A humbler goal suffices most of us. One asks only that he may do faithfully the daily duty as it comes. Another has an ideal of character, and longs to reach it. The mother thinks first and last of husband and children — that they may be happy, and the children grow up well. The bereaved one cherishes at heart a single yearning — reunion.

Do we not all feel at our best that beyond our highest personal hope lies some greater, better

Digitized by Google

reality? Our dearest aspirations, our purest wishes, merge in some ampler, nobler fulfillment that shall be, —

> One far-off divine event
> To which the whole creation moves.

There is a striking incident in the autobiography of Mazzini. He had in early youth devoted himself wholly to the redemption of Italy. Plans were crushed and hopes blighted; he found himself betrayed, a prisoner, with Italy's deliverance remote and uncertain. Then, he says, it dawned upon him that there was something greater than the rescue of his country; some higher destiny, beyond his knowledge, but which a divine power was forwarding. His own part remained the same, he must still live for Italy, but he knew now that whatever became of him, whatever became of Italy, the righteous and holy will of God would be done. With that assurance came peace. He went back to his lifework, but now no disaster or disappointment could overwhelm him. And Italy became free, but not in the way Mazzini had planned.

The merging of personal desires in acceptance of the divine will is the heart of religious

Digitized by Google

conversion. The conversion may take a crude form, but this in substance is what above everything else liberates the soul and makes the universe its glad home, — the acceptance of the highest known right as the one law, and the acquiescence in the universal order as beneficent and good.

So, we steer each one for his individual port, — be it Liverpool or Calcutta, be it an ideal of character, or the winning of some one's love; the welfare of a community, or the advance of mankind, — and we recognize that the final harbor is something which includes all and transcends all. Sailing on that voyage, the heavenly lights will always be above us for guidance, and every wind will serve our purpose: —

O thou God's mariner, heart of mine!
Spread canvas to the airs divine!
Spread sail! and let thy fortune be
Forgotten in thy destiny.

A thread of Law runs through thy prayer
Stronger than iron cables are;
And Love and Longing toward her goal
Are pilots sweet to guide the soul.

So Life must live, and Soul must sail,
And Unseen over Seen prevail;
And all God's argosies come to shore,
Let ocean smile, or rage or roar.

Digitized by Google

And so, 'mid storm or calm, my bark
With snowy wake still nears her mark;
Cheerly the trades of being blow,
And sweeping down the wind I go.[1]

[1] David A. Wasson: *Seen and Unseen.*

Digitized by Google

HANDICAPPED IN THE RACE

WHAT is the young man or woman to do who, on the threshold of active life, encounters a serious and permanent disablement? It is a girl ready and eager for college, and her eyes give out. Or it is a boy in whom some constitutional weakness develops, which, as often as he drives straight and hard at work, throws him on his back and holds him there. The great game of life is set, its exhilaration is already tasted, its prizes are in view, and you find yourself thrown out, a cripple and a weakling. How are you going to face it?

First of all — face it. Now and not before, you have got your real problem set you. This is your stunt — not simply to acquire education, or to win business success; but, given the man or woman you are, disablement and all, to work out your possible maximum of service and of character.

You can take for your motto, "I'll find a way or make one." Sometimes you must find the way. If you cannot use your own eyes, possibly you can use another's. Or, if the book-

Digitized by Google

world is really and finally closed to you, you must consider on what other side you can best grasp the business of living. There is many a gate to usefulness and power besides the gate of print. It may be that your nerves or your stomach protest inexorably against the indoor occupation you are looking to; well, the outdoor world is such a good place that you can afford time and trouble to fit yourself to it, and gain the full health that makes half the joy of living. And you have to find for each day the order and habit that fits your possibilities. With limited strength, or with strength in some directions and disability in others, it becomes a question of wise economy of force. It is not the rich man who is easy in his circumstances, but the man who lives within his income. Learn how much you can do to the best advantage, how to arrange your work and rest and play, and then train yourself to that till habit becomes a second nature.

Sometimes the way is not to be found by search, but made — hewed out by vigorous strokes, trod by steps as resolute as when the traveler beats under foot the snowdrifts that would bar him from his home. The day's work is just to be done whole-heartedly, pain or no

Digitized by Google

pain. Sometimes the malady that looked ingrained and incurable will disappear when one marches on regardless of it. Sometimes it *is* ingrained and incurable, and yet in spite of it the day's work and the life's work may be done, the joy tasted, the triumph won.

An essayist who was popular a generation ago, and may well be read now, — the writer of *Recreations of a Country Parson*, — has a chapter on "Screws." Screw is English slang for an unsound horse. We find, says the Parson, that pretty nearly every horse, whether worker or racer, has his weak spot. Perfectly sound horses are seldom met with outside of advertisements. Just so, it is true that every man has his weakness, — plenty of them, in most cases, — but even in the rarely fortunate there lurks some unsoundness of body or brain, liable to mar the most brilliant performance. A sorry outlook, for horse-kind and mankind! But then, goes on the Parson, think of the vast work done by all these unsound horses, — the countless loads they move, the pleasure drives they give, and even the races they win. The Derby itself has been won by a horse who came in first with a bandaged leg. Just so, my brother screw, may you and I pull our load or win our

Digitized by Google

race, spite of lame leg or weak eyes or shaky nerves.

Does the bandaged Derby winner sound apocryphal? Take an instance from the winners of the human Derby — the world-wide competition of achievement and service. A young man made a long sea voyage, as member of a scientific expedition. Good results were attained, and he did his full share, but his stomach never was wholly reconciled to the tossing of the waves, and he came home with such a tendency to nausea that during his long after life he never could apply his mind closely for more than fifteen minutes at a time. After every quarter-hour's study must come a complete rest. Rather a heavy handicap? Yet he accomplished a scientific work that made him famous. "I visited him once, in his English home," said President Eliot, "and he was eager to hear about Professor Gray, so we talked a little while with animation till his daughter came up to us and said, 'Papa, you forget you've been talking more than a quarter-hour'; so off in a hurry went Mr. Darwin." Yes, it was Charles Darwin, foremost explorer of Nature's laws, who worked out his vast problem to a triumphant answer in fifteen-minute peri-

Digitized by Google

ods! Some hope for us, is n't there, fellow cripple? Probably you or I will never write an *Origin of Species*, but it looks as if we might do our little chores under whatever handicap we carry.

Handicap — just what does the word mean? It means, first, an extra weight put on a race-horse who, being known to surpass his competitors, is thus put on an equality with them; and so, in general, it is applied to whatever disadvantage is imposed on a contestant of proved superiority, to equalize the chances of the others. So a handicap is a mark of superiority; it says, "You must do more than the others because you can do more." Treat your infirmity in the same way. It is a challenge to do your utmost, to better your best. The sound and well people should succeed, as a matter of course; be it yours to succeed against expectation.

Be sure, too, that the sound and well people, or those who look so to you, — the men of genius, power, opportunity, — carry each one his own special load, sometimes the heavier because nobody knows it and nobody makes allowance or gives sympathy. Genius and power have their specially irksome tasks.

Digitized by Google

Carlyle speaks for such: "Pain, danger, difficulty, steady slaving toil, shall in nowise be shirked by any brightest mortal that will approve himself loyal to his mission in this world; nay, precisely the higher he is, the deeper will be the disagreeableness, and the detestability to flesh and blood, of the tasks laid on him; and the heavier, too, and more tragic, his penalties if he neglects them."

But we are speaking specially of those who are under some outward and visible disablement. For such, no words have eloquence to match the actual deeds of the disabled. Turn again to our friends, the horses. Let's see, what was the name of that blind trotter who so distinguished himself? Rhythmic (thank you for the name, William!) — yes, Rhythmic,— and what record did he make? Two six three quarters! That was what a blind horse did, — trotted a mile in less than two minutes and seven seconds. Is n't there more glory in that than in Lou Dillon's 1.58½?

There are human Rhythmics. Not long since there died in Boston a lawyer, in successful practice, blind when he studied law and when he practiced it. His favorite idea was, said his friends, that blind people could do a great deal

Digitized by Google

more than they or other people think; that a large part of the occupations of those who see might be mastered by the blind. What novel is so interesting as the book that tells of Helen Keller's development, and tells of her wonderful teacher, Miss Sullivan? Close after it comes another story, almost equally wonderful, the education of Laura Bridgman. We need not look only at such exceptional cases, we have heroes and heroines all about us, — let each one think of his own. Here is a man with the lower limbs useless, but what has he accomplished with the rest of himself; what wide knowledge has he gained, what large work has he wrought, what an atmosphere of cheer he diffuses! All of us can recall our efficient cripples, our cheerful invalids, our victorious weaklings.

Rhythmic could never have trotted that mile had he not been handled by a most skillful driver, man and horse understanding and trusting each other perfectly. There could have been no Helen Keller without Miss Sullivan, and no Laura Bridgman without Dr. Howe. That is part of the meaning and beauty of these triumphs over impossibilities. They bring out as nothing else does the wonderful brotherhood

Digitized by Google

and unity in which we are set. In each smallest act we do, we are sustained and forwarded by a great social organism. It stretches out through the nations and back through the ages, but it touches us closest in our own family and friends. And where any one is weak, his weakness has this twofold meaning, to himself that he should subdue and rise above it, and to his stronger brother that right here he should bring his strength to aid.

That best of boys' books, *School Days at Rugby*, tells among other good things that Tom Brown found football and cricket better than hare-and-hounds, because one plays not merely for himself, but as one of a company. That holds good everywhere; team play is larger and finer than single play. And human life is team play on the widest scale. Every player has his place in the game. "They also serve who only stand and wait," sang the blind Milton. Tiny Tim, light and joy of the household, is a first-class player. And Scrooge, with his millions, is just an outsider and hindrance till he catches the spirit of the Christmas game, "good will to men," and falls into line.

When one seems blocked by adverse fate, helpless, baffled, there comes sometimes the

Digitized by Google

longing, "Oh, if I knew that some good meaning was in this and back of it; that it was part of a benignant plan, and not just an accident, — then I could face it!" That deep assurance, in its vivid consciousness, seems mostly reserved for the extreme emergencies, or the rare illumined hours. Sometimes in utmost need the soul feels itself sustained by "the everlasting arms." Sometimes before the majestic peaceful presence of Nature, or in the uplift of some supreme joy, there shines in us the consciousness that we are children of a divine love, heirs of a sublime destiny.

But there are many days when we cannot tread these heights, and apparently some faithful feet never tread them at all. For the unillumined hours there is always a resource. If you see and feel no heavenly providence, be yourself a little earthly providence. This momentary weakness you can subdue, this homely task you can perform, this perpetual disability you can out-tire by patience. In your own heart and will let the divine will be done! So spin your thread, and doubt not that it interweaves with a pattern whose full beauty and meaning will in good time appear.

Digitized by Google

PRAYERS AND THEIR ANSWERS

A WOMAN suffering under a heavy bereavement writes: "I wish I could talk with you about prayer. I pray most of the time, and nothing comes of it." Now, one hesitates before offering advice or suggestion on such a subject as prayer. For in these deep and delicate experiences there is great variety among people, and what is true for one may be false for another. Then again, language is inadequate for such matters, and it is easy to misunderstand. As Matthew Arnold says, in religion our best words are only "thrown out" at realities too high for them to reach. Yet, to one who prays almost constantly, and "nothing comes of it," it can hardly make the case worse to speak directly and frankly.

Consider a moment the reason of the thing. Does an all-wise and all-good power need to be told or to be importuned by you? When your husband or your child lay sick, attended by a skillful doctor and a devoted nurse, did you beg and petition doctor and nurse to do their best? You knew they were doing it. You tried

Digitized by Google

to follow their lead, and to make your care work in with theirs, — that was your part.

If now you think of a heavenly will and wisdom as supreme, a will infinitely wiser and more loving than yours, there would seem no better part for you than to study its ways, to follow its leadings, wherever you can understand them, to do whatever lies in your power, and beyond that to humbly and patiently wait. With a noble and gracious human friend, we are glad to watch and listen rather than talk. When we seek a conscious approach to the higher power, what better way than to school ourselves to such thoughts and purposes as accord with that power? Its direction of events we cannot comprehend, but, believing that its purposes are in the line of truth, purity, charity, we approach it by making our thoughts true, pure, charitable. If to the ear finely attuned the noises of earth would blend in a divine orchestral harmony, it is not for us to instruct the chief musician, but to listen intently, and add if we may an accordant note to the celestial symphony.

Or perhaps you do not believe that goodness and wisdom rule in the universe; perhaps that belief is to you incredible, or it suggests only a

Digitized by Google

doubtful possibility; it is far too vague and remote for your instant and pressing need. In that case, just take the world, or your little corner of it, as you find and know it. Take the facts about you as your best intelligence reads them, and fit your action to that reading. That will give guidance enough for the present.

Look at the broad facts of life. How does man actually get the things he most needs? How, first, does he get his physical sustenance? By digging and planting, reaping and winnowing, grinding and mixing and baking. That is the way man "prays" for bread. He used to accompany all this with petition and sacrifice to the sun-god and the rain-god. He has given up those petitions; he has taken instead to closer study of the soil, to the invention and use of new implements; and he gets more and better bread than he used to. Has he become independent of a higher power? That power, though he no longer names it "sun-god," "rain-god," "earth-god," encompasses him at every step. Earth receives the seed; sun and rain foster it; mysterious forces which we name chemistry and electricity encourage him first to study and then to harness and guide them. So, as to breadwinning, man fits himself to the

Digitized by Google

higher power. He has learned that, as Bacon put it, "Nature is governed by obeying her."

How does man gain the higher prize which we call goodness or character? He is started toward it by the inheritance of traits and tendencies which comes to him from all his ancestors. If he is fortunately placed, he is moulded by gentle influences from father and mother and friends, which play upon him long before he takes conscious thought for himself. Growing older, he has definite lessons in conduct set before him; he is told and shown the difference between right and wrong; he is schooled in his play with brothers and sisters. He comes to set before himself moral goals; he wants to be manly and brave; he seeks the approval of parents and the esteem of comrades. So deliberate purpose and resolute effort come into play. Institutions — the school, the church, the state — offer their help and ask his service. Hardships toughen him; difficulties educate him; affections enrich him; sorrows make him gentle. His whole growth in goodness is an absolutely natural process; it consists in learning and obeying and mastering the order in which he is set. That is his prayer for goodness.

Digitized by Google

How does man win for himself love? It comes first to him unwon by any act of his. The scarce conscious babe is welcomed into an atmosphere of tenderness. The growing child finds love meeting him at every step; providing for his wants, guiding, caressing, making him. Grown older, and thrown on his own resources, there is just one way for him to win love, — it is to deserve it, and to give it. The friendly find friends. The serviceable win gratitude. The leaders gain followers. The saviors are worshiped. An eager importunate heart, craving affection and devotion, may "trouble deaf Heaven with its bootless cries," but Heaven remains deaf and the prayers are still bootless. Serve, sympathize, keep eyes and heart open, let the hands be active to aid. In that way best you pray for love.

One is hungry for beauty. It is here; take it! Saying your prayers will not get for you a visit to the mountains of Switzerland or the galleries of the Vatican. But by rightly using your eyes you will find a heaven of beauty right about you, in the wealth of autumn and the white splendor of winter, no less than in the tenderness of spring and the profusion of summer. Did you see through yonder tenement-

Digitized by Google

house window an Irishwoman enfolding her sick child and looking into its face? The soul of Raphael's Madonna and Child is in that picture, if you have eyes for it. Learn to see the world and the men and women about you. That is the true prayer for beauty.

"Still," one objects, "all this seems very different from what Jesus taught, — that we are to ask good gifts from our heavenly Father just as children ask them from an earthly parent." No! Not *just as;* it is not a close likeness; the words of Jesus are "thrown out" as a picture, a suggestion, of what cannot be put in exact words. Take a large view of what Jesus taught. It is noticeable that he said very little directly about prayer, just as he said very little directly about a future life, and other subjects to which people are apt to direct their questions. But he taught and talked almost constantly about right action and right feeling. Take that collection of his sayings called the Sermon on the Mount. Almost the whole of it is concerned with what men ought to do and to be; sincerity, fidelity, purity, charity, forgiveness, — all put in most familiar and striking ways. The final word is: if you do the right things, your house stands firm on a rock; if you leave them un-

Digitized by Google

done, it falls in ruins. About prayer, specifically, he says little. He gives one short prayer. The whole of it is set, not toward gaining our wishes, but toward lifting our wishes and purposes from the human to the divine. Our Father, — that prompts childlike trust and gratitude. Thy kingdom come, — that enlists us in the noblest service. Thy will be done,— our personal will merges in the higher will. Daily bread, — that links our commonest need with glad and grateful dependence. Forgive, as we forgive, — that turns its whole force on our loving where we are inclined to hate. Lead us not into temptation, — that admonishes that we turn our steps and eyes from allurement. And always it is not "I" and "mine," but "we" and "our." In the closest approach to the Father, we take with us our brothers.

Jesus teaches the attitude of reverence and trust and joy toward this wonderful world and the power that sustains it. Look at the lilies and the sparrows, and be glad and fearless as they! Yet not for a moment would he have us lie idle and passive, because divine goodness provides for us. Ask, seek, knock! Grasp with firm hand the hand which earth holds out; tread with resolute step the upward path; open

Digitized by Google

your heart in love and pity to all human hearts; and so shall strength and gladness and love flow in upon you and fill and lift you.

The word "prayer" is often used in a more special and limited sense — as the direct cry of the heart to the higher power for help in its need. For that kind of prayer, too, there is ample room. It takes countless forms; spoken or silent, alone or in company, habitual or impulsive. To many there are forms of prayer which from use and association have in their very utterance some helping power. I have known men and women, mature and cultivated, who nightly repeated the verse learned in childhood: "Now I lay me down to sleep." They are not the words or the thoughts that a mature intelligence would choose; but thousands of repetitions, some underlying consciousness of the mother that taught them, the influence of unnumbered times when they have blent with tranquil surrender into the unknown world of sleep, — these have given to the simple words a soothing power. There is many another prayer or hymn that has become dear to those who habitually use them when they lie down or in the watches of the night. Some churches have liturgies of confession, supplica-

Digitized by Google

tion, and thanksgiving; prayers which have come down through hundreds of years, taking color and richness from the generations, and touching the worshipers who repeat them with some sense not only of their own past lives but of godly parents and ancestors, and of fellow-worshipers the world over praying in the same accents. And past naming or suggesting are the unworded prayers,—the uplifts of the heart, in aspiration, in communion, or sometimes in agonized appeal.

Not always does the appeal find answer,—certainly not immediate and conscious answer. Our sorrowing friend, who "prays most of the time and nothing comes of it," ah, she is not alone. But, on the other hand, the heavenly answer often comes when there has been no conscious asking. Sometimes waves of peace flow in upon us; sometimes when tempest-tossed a deep tranquillity hushes our fears, and we realize, with an assurance beyond words, that "neither death nor life, nor things present nor things to come, shall be able to separate us from the love of God." Or in our everyday walk, the men and things about us are disclosed in wonderful radiance,—we have glimpses of an all-embracing unity, in which we are a part.

Digitized by Google

In some form, in some degree, it may be believed, to all earnest and aspiring souls there is given if not habitually yet occasionally that sense of peace and safety whose presence makes care and fear impossible. By what better name can we call it than the voice of God in the soul?

But our chief part, our supreme business, our surest access to the springs of power and peace and joy, lies in habitual conformity to the order of the universe in which we find ourselves. Our best prayer lies in our homely obedience to the requirements of the material and moral world around us.

Come now to the familiar facts of existence, or to the hardest facts. You are bereft of the life that seemed more to you than your own, and you sit in darkness to which there comes no comfort, and your cries to Heaven find no answer. What can you do? You can face the facts and all the facts. The sorrow is real, it is inevitable, it is lasting. You must bear it for a long time to come; bear it in all degrees and phases; bear it with whatever of fortitude and patience and silent endurance you can command. But next, there is the voice of Nature protesting against sorrow, demanding

Digitized by Google

escape from it; that voice, too, you must hear. The pain must be endured because it must; it is to be lessened, to be escaped from, just as far as you can. But there are two ways of escape, one down and one up. The downward one is by stupefaction or dissipation, — by anything that blunts the sensibilities and lowers the tone. The upward one is, first, by Nature's ministries. Nature gives sleep, blessed sleep, and that you can guard and promote; Nature invites to health, and you are to cultivate health. Then there is the resource of work. Thank Heaven, the world is a great workshop to whoever will be a worker, — a field or a factory to the bread-winner, a library to the student, a hospital to the nurse. And all around you, though now perhaps invisible, lies beauty. All about you, if now unfelt, are pulsating hearts, hearts that need you, hearts that can enrich you. Right before you are paths of service, ways of work, and they summon faculties which you have not lost, though you may have forgotten them; they appeal to powers in you which are deepening while you think they are waning. Eyes open to the beauty, heart open to the other hearts, hands ready for the work, — this is your best prayer.

Digitized by Google

Your sorrow opens on the one side toward selfishness and on the other side toward love. It holds a potential blessing and a possible curse. Let it isolate and absorb you; wrap yourself in the color and habiliments of woe, and carry your grief as an isolating atmosphere; forget other children because your child is gone, other husbands and wives because you are widowed, — and you may shrivel and wither and slowly die at the root. Or you may learn a new sympathy with all who suffer. You may, while you can no longer give full happiness to one, minister in little ways to those near you. You may come into tenderer and wider relations with that human family of which your own little family was a type.

And your love for the one you have lost, — loss you call it; loss in a way and a most real way it is, yet how great a possession is yours. Your love itself is deeper, wiser, fuller. Your imagination lays hold now on the inmost traits of character, the ideal self. You see more of that ideal and real self than you saw before. Give full scope to that large, idealizing affection. It should be to you a new bond with whatever is finest and fairest in the inner and outer world. It should be not only grief, —

533636

Digitized by Google

far more, it should be inspiration, motive, hope, guidance, communion. Let it not isolate, but unite you with humanity.

> Sometimes I could deem
> I heard his voice, loved voice that guides me, say,
> "The earth we loved must never trivial seem,
> Although our joy has passed from earth away.
>
> "Go down at my behest
> The smallest, humblest, kindly task to do;
> I see the thorn-prints, hide them from the rest,
> Because thou lov'st me so, love others too."[1]

Live in this spirit, and you may find at last, beyond imagination or hope, that the universe which now seems to you so empty is blessed and divine. The companion you thought lost is yours by a finer, closer tie than ever before — a tie that widens toward communion with the universe of souls. The young bird leaves the nest in dread and doubt, — and lo, the air upbuoys him, and in place of the nest he has all the greenery of the forest for his home.

See what the universe gives man. He wants food, and here are earth and sun offering it to his toil. His higher nature craves goodness and nobility, and his whole earthly existence provides a school in which he

[1] Lucy Caroline Smith.

Digitized by Google

may train himself. Does he seek knowledge? Here is a boundless museum and library. Work? The earth is a challenge to all his powers. Beauty? Eye and soul cannot contain the gifts one wintry day pours forth. Companionship? A world of men and women are seeking him. Worship? The universe grows divine each hour as he grows to know it.

Seeing how all that is best in man of faculty and aspiration finds its answer, we seem to understand what Jesus meant when he said, "Our Father." Learning how the gift comes as we rightly seek it, we understand his words, "Ask, seek, knock." Recognizing the affinity between the seeking soul and the answering Power, we enter into his sense of relation closer than sonship, "My Father and I are one."

Yet again he said, "My Father is greater than I." The universe transcends not only man, but man's thought and desire. What we get is better than what we sought. Man began by seeking sustenance, and in the process he acquired manhood. He tried to make Nature useful, and beyond her utility he has found her beautiful. We parallel in ourselves the experiences of the race. When some shining height is gained, we find it to be a foothill of more

Digitized by Google

celestial summits. We ask to keep always with us the life that is our sunlight; and when that sun sets, a universe of stars bestows itself on us, and our own sun is hidden but for a night.

Digitized by Google

A JACK IN THE PULPIT

"CARDS are organized inanity." Such is the pronouncement of a fine and large-minded moralist, in an admirable book on the conduct of life. One reader was seized with a qualm of conscience at the words. Sure enough, this puttering over a handful of pasteboard scraps, with grotesque figures and meaningless dots, — what was it but systematic waste of time? How many hours had he wasted in this frivolity? So he fell asleep, with the sentence in his ears, "Cards are organized inanity."

Upon his slumbering fancy there rose a figure, — stout and jocund, with curling yellow locks, gorgeous clothing, a flat cap, a hatchet in one hand and a plume in the other. The vision spoke: "You took me for the Jack of Hearts? That is as near as your sleepy noddle is likely to get, and some old libel about stolen tarts is running drowsily in your brain. But in truth I am the Spirit of Cards. Are you not ashamed to look at me, remembering the slander you listened to from your Yankee preacher? You owe to me uncounted hours of amusement,

Digitized by Google

— blameless, gay, and restful. Have you forgotten the jolly holiday afternoons in college, — on the days when you could n't go boating to the lighthouse or tramping to West Rock, — and the group of good fellows around the whist table? Then there was that winter when you were stranded in a dull little country town, a stranger and almost companionless, till acquaintance with some kindly women began with the evening's game. You remember the friend who taught you California Jack, and the hours in his den when cards and gossip and philosophy and books and boxing were mixed together, and in that genial soil a friendship grew that was to outlast the stormiest gale. A hundred, yes, a thousand times, has your tired brain been relaxed and serious things have been forgotten, while you and your companions were busy with the painted playthings. What a moment of delightful suspense when you are looking over your hand, — what joy when a doubtful play proves successful, — what triumph when a second-hand finesse brings in two tricks, — and what a culmination when the odd trick falls to one or the other side.

"Whist, piquet, cribbage, bezique — they have been your humble faithful friends.

Digitized by Google

Once you were thinking yourself quite care-oppressed, when, as you listlessly began a game you found three bezique cards in your hand, and smiled at your good luck, and then laughed at yourself outright to see how shallow was your sadness. And after all, you did n't make double bezique!

"You are but a unit in a vast multitude who, amid the cark and care of life, have found amusement and refreshment in me. What a somber business life would be were not its trials and contests set off by the care-free hours that I and my kind diffuse! Remember the dull households to which I bring cheerful fun; think of the workers and fighters who snatch a breathing space over my little painted people; imagine how many solitary women are at this very hour forgetting their loneliness over well-named 'solitaire.' I am the answer to one of humanity's needs. I am older than your Puritanism, older than Christianity, older than the Pyramids. Primitive man devised my symbols. Priests predicted the future by my help. I was an evolution, as you say of everything nowadays. To divert a half-insane king of France was invented the noble game of whist. If it is true, as gastronomers claim, that the discovery of a new

Digitized by Google

dish does more for human happiness than the discovery of a star, it is surely true of a new game. Faith! I think your preacher with his 'organized inanity' is a straight descendant of those Puritans of whom Macaulay says that they opposed bear-baiting, not because it plagued the bear, but because it pleased the people."

(Oh, no, Mr. Jack, this preacher is a very fine fellow; only he lacks the sense of cards, just as some people lack the sense of music, and others lack the liking for dogs.)

"Yes, I know those whistless folks, — witless folks, I call them, — and they are mostly an over-grave lot, who take themselves too seriously and wear out the sooner. That was a wise word spoken to the lady who said she did not play cards: 'Oh, madam, what a sad old age you are preparing!' Remember how kindly the old masters have dealt with me and my children. Says Thackeray, 'Wise old Doctor Johnson regretted that he had not learned to play. "It is very useful in life," he says. "It generates kindness and consolidates society."' Who knows not Charles Lamb's delightful account of Mrs. Battle's whist, and her motto: 'A clean hearth, a fresh pack, and the rigor of

Digitized by Google

the game'? Better still is the true story of dear Charles Lamb's own evenings spent in playing cribbage with his querulous old father. What is it Scott says in *St. Ronan's Well* about piquet? 'The most beautiful game at which a man can make sacrifice of his fortune.' A left-handed compliment! But it reminds me, — I suppose that you, spite of your lapse last evening, are too intelligent to confound me for a moment — me, the Spirit of Cards — with the Spirit of Gambling. He steals my tools sometimes, but he busies himself just as much at the horse race, in the football field, or on the stock exchange, — there is no sort of kinship between him and me.

"Among Trollope's flesh and blood people, what a good scene is that where Archdeacon Grantley and the pursy rector and the meager doctor play whist at the Warden's tea party. You remember that capital passage in *The Old Curiosity Shop* where Dick Swiveller wakes from his fever, and finds the poor little Marchioness, who has nursed him through his sickness, sitting by his bedside playing cribbage, her right hand against her left; and when she turns up the jack he startles her by crying, 'Two for his heels!' Who forgets Mr. Pickwick in

Digitized by Google

the card-room at Bath, amiably doing his best at whist with three terrible old ladies? It is to be feared Mr. Pickwick played what is now called bumblepuppy. At any rate, his partner, Miss Bolo, became considerably agitated, and 'went straight home in a flood of tears and a sedan chair.' There was a novel that stirred up everybody a few years ago, *John Ward, Preacher*. It was a complication and culmination of theological problems and heart-breaking griefs; and about the cheerfulest ray across the gloom was the Saturday evening games of whist, in which little Mr. Denner played with Miss Deborah and Miss Ruth, and could n't decide which he wanted to marry. Take my word, it was because Mrs. Deland knew whist and a few things like it that she has ripened into about the sanest and wholesomest of American story-tellers."

(Our Jack seems to be somewhat versed in literature!)

"As for poker, which many delight in and many detest, and which is not wholly unassociated with the illegitimate transfer of cash, — well, you can hardly read intelligently an average American newspaper unless you know something of the game. How can you follow

Digitized by Google

your business or your politics unless you are well informed as to bluffing? How can you be a loyal Republican and support the stand-patters, or a good Democrat and denounce them, unless you know what it means to stand pat?

"I don't claim everything. Folks sometimes play the fool or the knave with cards, just as they do with newspapers and law books and Bibles. Overdone card-playing is worse than overdone roast beef. I need not talk about gamblers. Of another sort I have my opinion, and am too polite to express it, — people who may be called my devotees and fanatics. Your restless American spirit goes on refining and intensifying, inventing 'trump signals' and 'echoes,' getting up 'duplicate whist,' till it makes hard work out of play and keen competition out of easy fun; and making a religion of 'bridge' until one is tempted to mutter, *Pons asinorum!* Let them take it so who like it.

"If I wanted to prose, I could discourse for an hour about the ethics of whist. At its foundation is the same principle which rules in all conduct — mutual help. The man who plays his own hand regardless of his partner's is an ignoramus. Whist has its Pharisees, its publicans and sinners, and its saints. There are

Digitized by Google

players who annoy by their carelessness and irresponsibility, and there are those worse offenders who make themselves a terror by their severity — as Miss Bolo did to Mr. Pickwick. The wise player takes an interest, not wholly selfish, in his opponent's game; very fine for you and your partner to make thirteen tricks, but is n't there a pleasure, too, in seeing your opponents do the same? And yet there is always the honest self-regard of normal human nature. Who is so over-saintly as not to be just a little happier in winning than in losing?

"I do no small service in providing a meeting ground where people of different minds and tastes can come together in good fellowship and learn to like each other. You remember a summer hotel where among the company were a worthy couple whose ways of thought and speech were a little different from the rest, and this threw them into a sort of isolation; till in a happy hour the whist table came into play, and by its cheerful comradeship a friendly acquaintance ripened. When you are watching to see if your partner's hand works in with yours you are indifferent as to her acquaintance with George Meredith's novels; and even different systems of grammar are forgotten in

Digitized by Google

the common joy of a well-won rubber. Blessed are all the little links that bind people together; and when you cannot be work-fellows or thought-fellows, it is well to be play-fellows. It is just possible that play is as good as thought or work.

"Perhaps it has not occurred to your wisdom that morals or social service concerned themselves with whist and piquet. But your teachers might have suggested it. There is a maxim, 'Whether ye eat or drink or whatever ye do.' And your favorite Emerson is always telling us that law runs through the universe, and the same principle reigns in the germinating of an acorn, the building of a nation and the growth of a hero. Yes, and Emerson knows the worth of the relaxed and easy mood, the power that lies under the playful touch.

> Mask thy wisdom with delight;
> Toy with the bow, but hit the white.

"Let me tell you that I, the Spirit of Cards, am one of a brotherhood, together with the Spirit of the Story, the Spirit of the Theater, the Spirit of the Dance, and many another. All of us together make the Spirit of Play. And that, with the Spirit of Work, the Spirit of Rest, the Spirit of Beauty, the Spirit of Worship, the

Digitized by Google

Spirit of Love — these blend as the Spirit of Man and the Universe.

"Speaking now as the Spirit of Play, there are many men and women at whose birth I was the good genius, and dowered them with the lifelong gift of lightening and cheering their fellows by wit and fancy. You recall such a woman in your own town. She was strong and brave and helpful, but those who knew her thought especially of the wit that woke their laughter and left a kindly glow. How characteristic was her last appearance; chief actor in a wholesome, sunny play, given for the benefit of a charity; a theater filled with an audience in which almost every one knew her, so that the whole gathering was like a big family party; she the center and star. Only afterward we knew that she had risen for that evening from a sick-bed, from which she was not to rise again, and that with firm self-control she was holding down the pain while she made us laugh. That was a fit exit for a queen without a crown, a saint who wore no aureole.

"Yes, my good sir, I can speak, you see, as the Spirit of Play, but I am not ashamed to end as I began, as the Spirit of Cards. Go tell your moralist he should be too wise to speak scorn-

Digitized by Google

fully of a great promoter of human diversion, and so of refreshment, cheerfulness, renovation. He can get plenty of illustrations from me for his next preachment, or, best of all, let him learn to play whist, or at least cribbage. And if he wants a text for a sermon, here is one from that excellent lay preacher, Josh Billings: 'Life is like a game of cards; the glory is not in winning, but in playing a poor hand well.'"

(So our Jack of Hearts turns out a Jack in the Pulpit!)

Digitized by Google

THE ART OF MARRIED LIFE

THE sacred art and mystery of living together as husband and wife! It touches the deepest springs of human happiness and success.

When the novel reaches its last chapter, when the wedding-day crowns the happy story of love and courtship, then begins, for man and woman, the real test of what they are; then is thrown upon their own hands the question of what the future is to be. In a true marriage, the sweet season of romance that precedes the bridal day is but the harbinger of better things to come. It is like the grape blossom, filling the air with its fragrance, whose swift season heralds the grape that shall through the long summer drink the juices of the sun, and be harvested in the vintage for a ministry of gladness and life.

But the ripening is easily missed. It is missed oftenest, probably, through the man's fault. The first and great lesson of marriage is that the thought of another is to come before the thought of self. The revelation which true love makes is this: One sees in another soul

Digitized by Google

such beauty and attractiveness that its service is preferred to the service of self. No emotion which lacks this high element deserves to be called love. The desire of possession, the longing for intimate and habitual companionship — these come in, too, and make a part. But higher than these is that complete and joyful self-surrender in which a woman appears so lovely to a man that to make her happy becomes his strongest desire; and a woman sees in a man such nobility that she can gladly devote her life to him. That is the loftiness and the rapture of true love. To many and many a pair of lovers it comes at least as a passing mood. All depends for them on whether their future takes its keynote from that which consecrates this mood. Its rapture and ecstasy may pass; but the self-forgetting look upon another soul, the glad preference of another above self, has in it the stuff that should outlast the wear and tear of time. It is a thread meant to be woven into the web of eternity.

There are two motives to the service of others. One is the inward sense of obligation — which we call conscience. The other is such a sympathetic apprehension of the beauty in another's life, that this other becomes to us like

Digitized by Google

a better and dearer self. This is what comes, in its highest and fullest, when man and woman, looking upon each other, soul to soul, feel that divine attraction and self-surrender of which marriage is the outward seal.

The problem of married life is to maintain the nobility and elevation of this early sentiment. The chief requirement is simple enough. It is only: Put your wife, or husband, before yourself in your thoughts and choices. To the wife, this lesson is generally emphatically spoken by the circumstances into which marriage brings her. It gives her as her chief business the making of a home for her husband, and afterward for her children. The event of her day is his return from work. *Her* work is to make him comfortable and happy. His satisfaction and approbation are the standard of her success or failure. So she is put at once into an outward relation of service. Often there is a mingling of hardship in this. Before the wedding-day she was a queen; her will and wish were law. Her lover made it his first thought to please her. Now it must be her first thought to please him. His main occupation lies no longer with her, but with his daily work. He may be ever so devoted and tender, but most of

Digitized by Google

his time and much of his thought must now go elsewhere. Her great business is his comfort and happiness; *his* great business is something apart from her. And he will never begin to know all she does for him. His mannish eyes miss half the little details of work that go to carrying on a household in comfort. He will be a somewhat rare man if he ever fully comprehends the broad fact that her individual life is merged in service to him. It is the woman's lot to do more than she gets credit for. The heart's wages for work is appreciation, and few wives get full pay. It is when some sense of these things breaks upon the woman, in the early months of her married life, that she stands face to face — as probably never before — with her destiny. And what destiny offers her is service. A hard gift to look upon at first! Declined, or grudgingly taken, it will wound and bruise a lifetime through. Bravely accepted, it will temper the whole life to celestial sweetness. It is just here that the wife has the advantage over the husband, that outward circumstances set straight before her the lesson of self-renunciation and service in the household, as they do not set it before him. His face must turn towards his daily work. There his

Digitized by Google

best energy is spent, and his vitality is drained. When he comes home he wants rest. He feels himself, in a measure, off duty. And here he gets the full comfort of a good wife, and the home that a good wife makes. He is taken in and rested, and shielded from annoyance, and encompassed by a hundred gentle ministries. Here he can forget the toils of his day, or review them in a serener light; finding here gladness for his successes, and comfort for his failures, and appreciation where others have misjudged him. Here body and soul find refreshment, and he is sent out a new man for the morrow's struggle. And if his wife is not allowed to give him this, she is cheated as much as he is. This is her happiness and reward; this is what crowns her work.

Yet this resting-time has its danger. A tired man, like a sick man, is apt to be selfish. "A sick man is a scoundrel," growled Doctor Johnson. And just as life brings no gift so beautiful and blessed but its value depends on the way it is received, so that supreme treasure, a woman's ministering love, may, by selfishness in the recipient, be made to work his hurt. Who has not known men who were spoiled by the goodness of their wives? Men who allowed

Digitized by Google

themselves to receive until they utterly forgot to give? The more generously and gladly a wife gives, the more watchful should the husband be that he make due return. Return not only in feeling but in act. A fraction at least of the household service is his fair share. Shame to him if, big masculine creature as he is, he pleads the baby act, and is always "too tired" to save her steps or lift at least one end of the load. And, too, let him practically recognize her right to some individual and independent interests. Because his comfort and happiness are her first concern, they need not be second and third and all. Whatever special taste or faculty she may have, in books or handiwork or social service, should have what scope is possible, and the encouragement and sympathy of her husband.

All this talk is quite apart from the conditions of hosts of married people. The state of matrimony is often ravaged by gross selfishness, neglect, brutality. Such sinners the present discourse does not seek to convert to righteousness. It is addressed to people of conscience and of ideals, people who honestly mean to do their best, and is designed chiefly to suggest considerations which may be overlooked

Digitized by Google

or forgotten. Beloved brethren and sisters, we do all of us desire and intend to be the best of husbands and wives, — what stands in the way?

The foe of married happiness is inattention. The real wrong to the wife, the real failure of the husband, is when he becomes unconscious of what she is doing for him, and what she is in herself. At first her ministries and her affection are delightful to him. Then, perhaps, they become a thing of course — received, enjoyed in a fashion, but hardly thought of. And sometimes, though not so frequently, the wife becomes unthoughtful of her husband. Perhaps into most marriages there creeps, on one side or on both, something of this indifference. Husband and wife live together in chiefly external relation; he is the bread-winner, she is the housekeeper; they accept each other's good qualities as men wear easy-fitting clothes, without noticing; they put up with each other's defects as with a smoky chimney or any other annoyance. They would confess to no alienation; they have only got used to each other. It is the same "getting used" that robs life of its brightness; that makes us blind to the stars, and the clouds, and the bright procession

Digitized by Google

of the day and year, because we have seen them so often; that keeps us mostly in a numb, half-alive state, from which only occasionally are we roused to feel that we are living in a divine universe, and are ourselves divine. It is so that love rouses us, showing to man and woman something Godlike in each other, something in another soul worthy to live for, and too great to die. Then, the eyes once opened, it is left to us to keep them open. And in a marriage which is not wholly a mistake — a marriage in which souls have once stood face to face, and clasped hands — no other word touches closer than this the secret of preserving that high union: that husband and wife should keep their eyes open to each other. A man should every day see in his wife the woman she is. Whatever purity, sweetness, womanliness, he once saw in her, and thrilled at the sight of; whatever fuller and richer growth the years have brought, — these things he should see in her continually. Not a mere part of the domestic machine should she be to him, — not a mere comfort and convenience and pleasure to himself; her soul in its full stature should come to his constant thought. Whatever charm of face or manner, whatever womanly grace,

Digitized by Google

whatever quickness of thought or delicate sympathy would strike a stranger's notice, ought far better to be seen and prized by him, her husband. It is little to say that her face ought to be as beautiful each day to his eyes as if they looked upon it for the first time; it should be far more beautiful, because he has learned to see through its windows the soul within. And in the same way the wife should look upon her husband. It is this true and tender regard which makes the right atmosphere for the soul to ripen in. Few things touch us so deeply as to have the best that is in us made full account of. To know that our faults, too, are open to that sweet and gentle gaze; to long to be worthy of a love so pure and high that only our highest and ideal self can deserve it — what other influence can so strongly draw us toward our noblest possibilities? This is the work of true marriage — to reveal two souls to each other in their ideal beauty, and then to bring that ideal to realization.

Woman is set in the household, and man is sent out into the world. He has to learn from her the household lessons of service and gentleness, and she needs to catch from him the larger outlook. It is narrowness of thought that

Digitized by Google

oftenest incapacitates the wife for full companionship with her husband. It is good that she should, as far as possible, learn to enter into his large masculine interests, and sympathize with them. Sympathize with *them*, not merely with him; the latter will not satisfy him if he is a man of any largeness. Two people ought not to be all the world to each other. Two pairs of eyes should see twice as much as one. The best affection is not that which is solely personal, and ends with its object. Whatever good things a man learns, whatever large interests he pursues, in his world of business, or politics, or thought, his wife should be able to share with him. A minister's wife pays him a very poor compliment who, when he preaches, is simply anxious, or proud, or disappointed, as to his personal success in the sermon. She thinks of that sometimes; so does he; but if he is a true preacher he forgets himself when the word of truth is glowing within him; and if she is fully his wife, she, too, when he is at the highest, forgets to be proud of him or anxious for him, and moves with him in the sweep of his thought and the thrill of the eternal realities.

And let the husband of a true woman lay it to heart that he has at least as much to learn from

Digitized by Google

her view of life and the world as she has to learn from him. If the man's outlook is apt to be broader, the woman's insight is apt to be finer.

Let me digress for a moment. The founder of Springfield, William Pynchon, falling into discredit with the Boston authorities for theological heresy, took himself back to England, where under Cromwell's rule he could be as heretical as he pleased — within limits. He did not stretch his tether very far, for his chief production was an inquiry as to how long Adam and Eve lived in Paradise before they were expelled. He proves to his own satisfaction that, having been created in the morning of the sixth day, in the afternoon of that same day they transgressed, were sentenced, and banished. Next day they instituted the Church. "And if," proceeds Pynchon, "you ask who was the congregation and who the preacher, I answer, Adam was the preacher, and discoursed to Eve upon the wretched state into which she had brought them and their posterity!" So ancient and time-honored, according to good William Pynchon, is the custom that husbands shall preach and wives shall listen.

But — new times, new manners. The women are getting their turn at preaching, and it was

Digitized by Google

time they did. And wise is he who being wedded to a discreet wife, — quite disinclined though she may be to ascend the pulpit, — wise is he who skillfully elicits and reverently appropriates what she can give him of her readings in the great Book of Life. She has read pages which will never be opened to his mannish eyes save as she re-tells them to him. For instance, her own special chapter of Motherhood, — what education that gives her! To have borne and trained and companioned children, motherwise, entitles to a degree in Nature's university beyond all the honors conferred by Oxford or Berlin or Harvard. Let any mere man listen reverently to what any mother can teach him. And there are childless women who have motherly wisdom, as there are unmarried women who have wifely wisdom.

It is community of feeling and of interests that draws close the marriage bond, and it gets its perfection when the common feeling and interest are staked in what is most precious and permanent. Nature, in her divine order, soon brings into married life that most precious and lasting of interests, new lives to be nurtured, and to inherit the best of what went before. The advent of children to the married pair is an

Digitized by Google

instance and symbol of what their union means. Brought by that union into a nearness to each other of which the language is, "We are one," the two are not thereby isolated from the rest of the world; they are led into closer, more vital relation with the whole living universe. They are to serve with new power, to love with new largeness. Ever their horizon is to widen. Through heart joined to heart, they feel the life of God. Their prison was broken when to live solely for self became impossible. They are to live now for each other and for the kingdom of God. Tasting love, they taste eternity.

Digitized by Google

PRISON OR FAMILY?

THE word *solitude* may stand for the most burdensome of human experiences. Perhaps any man who looks back upon the hardest hour of his life will find that its heaviest weight lay in feeling that he was alone. It is the repeated use of that word, with its appropriate image, that gives its power to the surpassing expression of human desolation in "The Ancient Mariner":—

> Alone, alone, all, all alone,
> Alone on a wide, wide sea.

The sense of solitude is never so keen as when it is set in relief against the full, pure joy of the family. There is no more pathetic picture than that of the homeless outcast looking in upon the light and warmth of a group about the household fire.

There are in the Scriptures words which address themselves directly to that sense of loneliness which is born of the memory of lost comfort: "God setteth the solitary in families." "A father of the fatherless is God in his holy habitation." "Thy Maker is thy husband." "More are the children of the desolate than the

Digitized by Google

children of the married wife, saith the Lord." The New Testament answers to the Old: "Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted." "No man liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself." "All things are yours: the world, or life, or death, or things present or things to come, all are yours!"

These are the expressions of a truth which is born just as freshly into human hearts to-day as it was thousands of years ago. They are the words of a gospel which finds new and living utterance from the lips of the seers and sages of each succeeding generation. The way to receive that gospel into our hearts is as simple as the giving a cup of cold water to a thirsty child. Before we ask what are the nature and method of this divine resource, consider that nothing that has yet been said touches the real depth of the evil of isolation. We are too prone to measure everything by the vividness of our own sensations of pleasure or of pain. When we say that solitude is misery, we feel as if we had said the worst about it. But genuine solitude means something a great deal worse than misery. It means moral torpor. It means the starvation of the noblest faculties. It means spiritual death. You say that you are unhappy: what

Digitized by Google

of that? Every one who is good for anything is unhappy sometimes. "Thy suffering," says Carlyle, "is the inverted image of thy nobleness." But if you are in real isolation, — not merely the outward semblance of it, — then you are doing nothing for others, giving nothing to others, feeling nothing with others. You are outside of that law of mutual service which is the bond of the moral universe. You are outside of that principle of sympathy which is the life-blood of humanity. None of us, thank God, can put himself completely beyond the pale of service and of sympathy. Seclude ourselves, starve ourselves, as we will, it remains true, even in spite of us, that no man wholly liveth to himself and no man dieth to himself. But, just in proportion as we willfully or negligently get into isolation from other lives, so do we pass further into the Arctic region of frozen desolation and death.

No life with any touch of moral greatness is, if deeply examined, a solitary life. Look, for instance, at our modern hermit, Thoreau. One says, at first sight, that here was a man who was both great and wholly lonely. But the very meaning of Thoreau's life, the secret of its power and rapture, was that he found in Nature

Digitized by Google

and her creatures a most living companionship. The pond, the forest, the wild things of water and wood and air, had a power to open in him fountains of delight and of love. Not only this: he most significantly betrayed that, after all, a relationship with humanity was a deep necessity of his nature. He lived apart from the world; but then he took the world into his confidence, and told to all of us the charming story of what he had found and done. He became friend and benefactor to every one of the thousands whom his pages stir to a new thrill of delight. Because he was a man, and a man of large pattern, it was a necessity for him to share his best with other men.

Very many of us are set in circumstances which create a degree, sometimes a high degree, of external solitude from other human lives. The problem which that situation gives to us is how to rise above our external circumstances, to get out of the prison into which outward facts seem to thrust us, and come into a sphere of loving, living, spiritual relationships. It is to find out *how* God sets the solitary in families, and by our responsive action to meet that divine purpose and give it effect.

The way is simply to keep our eyes open, our

Digitized by Google

minds open, our hearts open. We are surrounded, beset, crowded upon, by realities appealing to our profoundest affections. Beauty enspheres us. Human need implores us. Human goodness shines upon us. On every side the wonders of earth and sky encompass us. On every side we touch sentient beings, each one full of throbbing, sensitive life; each one needing something that we can give, be it but a look, a word, a caress; each one offering to our mind endless marvel, to our helpfulness infinite action, to our pity, our admiration, or our love, measureless stimulus and food.

Emerson, in his "Threnody," — that wonderful song of love and loss, and consolation in which loss is swallowed up and love grows divine, — makes the heavenly voice say to the bereaved father: —

> To be alone wilt thou begin,
> When worlds of lovers hem thee in?

Yes, worlds of lovers, but they are for the man who loves. They are for the man or woman whose eye is open to see, and whose heart is open to give.

"All things are yours!" wrote Paul to the Corinthian converts. "All are yours!" A fine bit of brag, thinks the man who, clutching his

Digitized by Google

bank-books and title-deeds, believes in no other possession than such as these bear witness to. Well, who owns the mountains yonder, Mount Tom and Holyoke, and all that range that lifts itself like a great crested breaker against the sky? I do not know whose names the title-deeds in the register's office may bear; but I know people who own that whole mountain range. They were born within sight of it. The grand forms were part of that picture in which the world revealed itself to the opening childish mind. They roused the young sense of delight and awe. The day came when little feet were led, the little hand held by a tender, elder hand, up to the summit, and the eyes looked in wondering delight on the fair scene below. As years went on, those mountains seemed to blend with the human life of struggle and joy and sorrow and achievement which worked itself out in their calm, eternal presence. As each new page of the story was opened, on its margin was stamped their image. Upon the heart kept reverently open toward them, they breathed a peace, a strength, a sense of things divine; such as came from the mountains of Judea to the Psalmist when he sang: "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my

Digitized by Google

help." "As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about his people, from henceforth even forever."

But it is, above all, the ensphering of our own life with other *human* lives through which we come to our full stature. The true image of moral isolation from humanity is the prisoner immured for years in a solitary cell. In the horrors of that situation, as Dickens for example has depicted it in *The Tale of Two Cities*, the worst features have their true counterpart in any life which, while passed in the outward companionship of men, is shut off by internal barriers from the interchange of service and sympathy with them. That person is most of all to be pitied who in such isolation is so dull of sensibility as not to acutely feel the misery of his situation. Consciously felt or not, its sure, inevitable effects are a withering up of the springs of life, a paralysis of the heart, an unbalancing of the faculties tending to total wreck. If we let ourselves drift into moral isolation, seeking only our own ends, cognizant only of those sensations that begin and end in ourselves, then the world becomes to us like that worst of all prisons which is made up of solitary cells. But when we break through the parti-

Digitized by Google

tion walls, and mingle in mutual helpfulness with our neighbors on the right hand and on the left, then the world becomes to us a cheerful, busy workshop. Even its most appalling scenes become like the wards of a hospital, where the worst pain and disease are matched by heroic effort to overcome the evil. Nay, the world is then as one great family, where even for the wanderer there is love that watches and prays and hopes. So fast and so far as we enter into sympathetic relations with other lives, we find that God has taken us out of our solitude and set us in families.

For example, here is a woman who lost all but one of her children in their early childhood. She took into her household, one after another in succession, three or four homeless waifs. One or two of them proved failures on her hands. One grew up under her care into a faithful, useful drudge. One became an intelligent, well-disciplined, promising girl, whose prospects are as fair as if they had not once been blighted at the start. She had given to her a second chance, as it were almost a second birth, by this woman's goodness. So, again, I recall a man who at an advanced age was bereft of the wife who through many years had been the supreme

Digitized by Google

source of his comfort and happiness, and had been to him like daily food and sunshine. The blow left him a saddened and, in one sense, a lonely man for the rest of his life. But it quickened to even finer and more constant exercise that active benevolence which had been the ruling principle and habit of his life. He was not an imaginative man, nor highly susceptible to direct spiritual consolation; but under the inspiration of sorrow he threw himself with such active and tender helpfulness into ministry to others that a double work was wrought. There went out upon other lives an ever widening circle of benefactions, kindling in their turn impulses in other lives to gratitude and to service; and in himself, all unconsciously, there was wrought a new sweetness, a sort of divine gentleness and long-suffering, in which his beautiful life came, in its very latest years, to full and perfect flower.

Do you remember how the decisive impulse was given to the public services of that great and faithful and pure servant of the English people, John Bright? He says: "I was in Leamington, and Mr. Cobden called on me. I was then in the depths of grief, I may almost say of despair, for the light and sunshine of my house

Digitized by Google

had been extinguished. All that was left on earth of my young wife, except the memory of a sainted life and a too brief happiness, was lying still and cold in the chamber above us. Mr. Cobden called on me as his friend, and addressed me, as you may suppose, with words of condolence. After a time, he looked up and said: 'There are thousands and thousands of homes in England, at this moment, where wives and mothers and children are dying of hunger. Now, when the first paroxysm of your grief is over, I would advise you to come with me, and we will never rest until the Corn Laws are repealed.'"

In such cases as I have instanced to you, and in the whole class of generous lives of which these are types, it does not always happen that a reward and recompense of conscious happiness goes along with the good deed. Happiness depends on a great deal beside the moral quality of our lives. It is no test of the worth of our characters. We may say our life is like a coat, with its inner and outer sides, the inner side being the sensation felt by ourselves, the outer side the effect produced upon others. We need to think less about the inner side and more about the outer.

Digitized by Google

The usefulness of our life, its joy, its sense of freedom and of wholeness, its abounding and exultant vitality, its steadfastness under shock, its beauty and bloom steadily heightening under all the wear and tear and cark and fret, have their springs in our sympathetic entry into other lives. Think of it! How much meaning your own personal life has, when you look upon it seriously; how much meaning, be it even of deprivation and hunger; how much meaning, too, of conscious good, of struggle among contending forces of good and evil, of aspiration and desire! Look round upon your household companions and your neighbors; behind every face lies another personal life, with its burden, its joy, its struggle, as infinite and sacred as your own. Look with this thought upon your family, upon your servants, upon the human stream that hurries along the street. Enter into this thought, and life multiplies itself to you, as the material universe multiplies itself when we know that every star is a world. You may make it a multiplication not merely in thought, but in fact, just so far as you will by active sympathy merge yourself in these other lives.

It may be said that for getting access to other

Digitized by Google

lives there are two keys. One we call Service, the other we will name Imaginative Sympathy. By that phrase, I mean the inward reading of other lives, which gives us true knowledge of them. We get such comprehension by looking intently, thoughtfully, *imaginatively*, upon the people with whom we are brought in contact. Take, for example, the case of a person with whom you are brought into inevitable, habitual contact, in the workshop or the family, and who through some fault or some uncongeniality perpetually frets and galls you. You try to be forbearing, but mere effort of resolution does not carry you a great way. Try now for a little time to enter into that person's thoughts and sensations and memories. Perhaps you will discover that you must be as galling to him as he to you, and that both of you are equally in fault or equally innocent. Perhaps you will find that what is now in him a real limitation of character had its origin in troubles of past years, worthy to win your profoundest pity and forgiveness. Say it is a narrowness of vision that frets you, a petty way of looking at things: you may find that through long, weary years the external horizon of that life was such a narrow one that almost of necessity the soul

Digitized by Google

came to mirror the pettiness of its environment. You may find that what you have felt as an inexcusable fault — of irritable temper, for example — is what remains of the hard and half-victorious struggle with a great natural infirmity.

The art of entry into other lives may be hinted at by a simple illustration. You and I are talking together, and I tell you something that interests me deeply — what happened to me yesterday, what I once saw in traveling, or some thought that has taken strong hold of me. Your interest is stirred by what I say, and presently you in turn mention briefly and by hint or intimation some like experience of your own. I, very probably, listen to you with due civility, acknowledge by a nod or word what you have said, and then, when courtesy permits, return with much more genuine interest to go on with *my* stories or *my* chain of ideas. But suppose I accept that opening on your part as a switch to draw me off the rails of *my* thought, — those old rails that I have traveled a hundred times, — upon the unfamiliar track of what you have to say. I listen, I am interested, I question, I get all you can give me. In that case, I have let you read to me a page or a chapter from the

Digitized by Google

book of your own life. It is simply marvelous how much of themselves men will disclose to a person who listens with true interest and sympathy. I do not mean people of a weak and washy garrulity, or morbid self-love craving the flattery of attention; though a little patience even with our neighbors' egotisms may not only exercise our kindness but enlarge our knowledge. But the people of self-respect and self-command, whose characters are stamped with manly reticence and womanly dignity, are yet, as a general rule, ready to impart the best that is in them, to a degree very far beyond our ordinary expectation, upon the one condition that they have a receptive and responsive and trustworthy listener. The true impulse of human nature is to share the best it has. The *need* of human nature is to share its best, its highest thought and deepest feeling. It may almost be said that the greatest service we can render to other lives, and the greatest enrichment we can receive from other lives, are both comprised in the one act of truly listening.

I have spoken of solitude in its sense of being shut up within our own personality, as an unnatural and evil thing. There is also a solitude, partial or temporary, which is a good and ne-

Digitized by Google

cessary thing. We need some frequent and habitual withdrawal from human contact, that we may taste a calmer and fuller communion with our own hearts, with Nature, and with God. The deepest lessons of life come to us when human eye does not see or human ear listen. Sometimes there come to us necessary periods of seclusion, in some experience too personal and profound for any sharing. Each soul, too, is forever set within a certain sphere of its own, which none may invade. "The heart knoweth its own bitterness, and a stranger intermeddleth not with its joy." There is a privacy which even the most intimate love must respect, and, in respecting, finds its own privilege and perfection. Yet it remains always true that we are never really alone. We are ensphered in eternal and living relation with all life. The double truth — of the soul's individuality in which it lives apart, and its oneness with all other life — may be imaged by the relation of our world to the starry order. With what ever new awe there breaks upon us, as we look toward moon and sun and stars, the sense of the vast spaces transcending imagination's flight that stretch between us and them. But then rises the other truth, — that world and

Digitized by Google

sun and planets, and each starry system within itself, are linked together by light that pulses between, by vibrating waves bearing in themselves the seeds and secrets of all life and growth, by forces of attraction that drive the harnessed spheres in unswerving order. So is the soul of man — separated as by stellar spaces from each other soul — linked with each other soul in eternal union.

It may be that I speak to some one who seems shut up by necessity within a lonely sadness. It may be by the recent breaking of tender ties; it may be by the imminent shadow of coming loss; it may be by some trial which cannot be imparted or shared. And necessity or duty or affection may hold you closely to your post. There may be possible for you at present little free or familiar access into other lives. It may seem to you that out of this sad solitude no harvest of future good can spring. Know this: It is when we rightly meet that hardest human task, to endure and to wait, that God works in us that which he is sure to put to use. I seem to hear a voice to-day from roots far down under snow and earth: "We are alone. We are in the dark. No leaf or blossom is fed from us. We have waited long. We

Digitized by Google

seem dead." Dead? You are full of earth's life-blood. You are guarding it through the cold and darkness and loneliness. In you are hid the secret and the promise of all June's beauty and September's fruitfulness. You, too, who are living a human life, as if beneath frost and snow, — you, by all your patience and fidelity, are guarding and nurturing what God will one day bring to blossom and to fruit. You do not know, I do not know, just what that fruitage will be. It may be the white blood-root, or the gentian, or the ear of wheat. It may be harvested in time or in eternity. It will not fail.

Digitized by Google

TO THE "DON'T WORRY" CLUBS

It is surprising how soon the appearance of a pest is followed by the discovery of the antidote. The doctors find out what particular germ is the cause of diphtheria or typhoid; then the search grows hotter, and in a little while, lo, they have found the antitoxin which puts that germ out of business. Two or three decades ago there was complaint of the physical degeneracy of the American people; now athletics have come into fashion, and we are turning out a race of young athletes. People were wearing themselves out by hurry, and there came forward teachers of "power through repose." And so, when the general quickening of pace and multiplying of interests have developed habits of feverish anxiety there comes a special message of steadiness and quiet, with the motto "Don't worry," and clubs and societies carrying that as their flag.

But, indeed, this trouble, of undue anxiety, is as old as humanity. And "Don't Worry" clubs, under some name or other, are as old as religion and philosophy. Those fine old fellows

Digitized by Google

the Stoics made great account of this. The Buddhists — how many hundred millions are there? — hold this as a first object, to subdue cares and worries by living above them, and so at last — perhaps after ages of successive existences — to emerge into the state they call "Nirvana"; a state which unsympathetic Western scholars have sometimes translated by non-existence, but which rather signifies supreme calm and blissful repose. Christianity treasures among the dearest words of its founder his bidding to take no more anxious thought for the morrow than the sparrows and the lilies. The oldest and the latest forms of religion seek the same end, in ways not so different as they look at first. Christian science, mental healing, the "New Thought" — they all invite to escape to the higher atmosphere above all frets and fears. And the churches have no monopoly of the business. Our friend John, who was married the other day, exclaims: "What does a man care for little troubles who has won the desire of his heart? The estate of matrimony is the greatest Don't Worry club in the world!"

Well, there may still be room for some humble studies how to reach the great end. You re-

Digitized by Google

member what the puzzled theological student said when, in his examination, he was questioned about the doctrine of total depravity. "Total depravity," he answered, "is — is — a good doctrine, if well lived up to!" The doctrine of Don't Worry is even better, if well lived up to — but there's the rub. Somehow it is easier said than done. A good starting-point is the old maxim, "Don't worry about what you can't help, for that does no good; and don't worry about what you can help, but help it." There is no more fruitful source of worry than the things which ought to be done and are not done. A consciously neglected duty frets like a thorn in the flesh. It is a great help to our good intentions to have a system and order which keeps the desk or the work-bench or the brain clear of misplaced trifles. That dear woman, Lucy Smith, in a chatty letter to a young girl, wrote about unpacking some trunks and arranging their contents, and went on : "I think I shall go to sleep to-night with a sense that a place has been found for everything and that everything is in its place. My dear, order is essential to happiness, and happiness is essential to good nature, which makes the happiness of others, and so let you and me try hard

Digitized by Google

to keep our drawers neat." There's a whole gospel in that.

I remember what another brave woman used frequently to say: "This morning everything looked hard and dark, so I picked out the most disagreeable thing there was for me to do, and did it, and then the next, and long before my work was done I was in good spirits."

Of course, health is among the first conditions of good cheer, and of course health is just as much our business as goodness is; or, rather, health is one branch of goodness. There is one form of physical and hence spiritual depression, to which conscientious and earnest people are especially liable. It is what I call "the saint's sin" — the sin of overdoing. (But don't think, because that is a sin of yours, that you are necessarily a saint.) There is a trifling little story, so small that an editor would hardly use it to fill up a six-line gap at the end of a page, but which has somehow floated down for thousands of years, for the lesson it holds. I can but clumsily reproduce the storiette which the Greek deftly shaped in fifty words, but here is the substance: A boy saw a jar filled with goodies, — nuts or figs or what-not, — and, thrusting in his hand, seized a handful, and then

Digitized by Google

found he could not pull his hand out again. As he stood whimpering, a bystander said, "You simpleton, drop some of them and you'll be all right!"

I think of that when I see my friend, little Miss Genevieve. She is a school-teacher, and teaches so well that even out of school hours her children come buzzing round her like bees round a honey-pot. She is taking an excellent course of lectures on philosophy, and is just now interested in the relation between Berkeley and Hume and Kant. She is following out a special course of reading in English history, and is at present struggling somewhat wearily with the Anjous and the Plantagenets. The Woman's Alliance and the Y. W. C. A. — or is it the W. C. T. U.? — count her as a faithful supporter. She is conscientious in her correspondence and punctilious in her calling list. And so, and so — the wrinkle between her eyes is growing permanent, and one notices a weakening of her voice; and I fear, I fear, that some day the children will begin to whisper, "Miss Genevieve is getting cross!" And I would that some friend, more persuasive than I, would whisper to her, "Dear Miss Genevieve, drop some of them, and you'll be all right!"

Digitized by Google

But what shall we say of those who are carrying heavy burdens which they cannot lay aside, or who are preyed on by apprehension of probable troubles or by the pressure of present griefs? The scale grades up from little troubles to big. One is going to the dentist's to-morrow, and is likely to be hurt. One has a shrinking income, and what is to keep the wife and babies? Another is facing a malady which threatens the body and may invade the mind. Away yonder is a Russian sailor — he holds his life as dear as you or I — who knows not when a Japanese torpedo may send his ship to the bottom. Here are a father and mother whose daughter is in an insane asylum. And here are another father and mother whose son is in state prison.

When one thinks of the mass of human woe and fear, sometimes the voice is hushed, and the pen pauses; words of consolation or advice sound glib and empty. But then the mind turns to what men and women have achieved when beset by just such foes as these; of the heroes and saints; those who "through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, stopped the mouths of lions, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight." If

Digitized by Google

one could only tell the brave stories he has known, tell them just as they happened! I recall one noble soul, bearing griefs as heavy as are laid on humanity, yet triumphant over them so that her daily home was in a world of beauty and of love, and light and cheer radiated from her presence.

The saint's secret — who can tell it? We read something of it in the "living epistles" we meet now and then, but its language is hardly translatable into words. Fidelity and open-heartedness — they are the keys of the true heaven. First, to do the duty, or face the danger, — then, to look off and out to all the good and life that fills the universe and pours into the attentive eyes and open heart.

Sometimes under constant pressure of trouble one utters a wish to change this world for another. That is just what you can do. There is always a larger world surrounding and inviting you. There is indeed a whole series of worlds ready for you as soon as you will enter them. Your personal life is at the center of unnumbered concentric spheres, each enfolded by another. Just as your body is enveloped first in a dress, then in a chamber, beyond that in a house, and that set in the ground, widening out

Digitized by Google

as far as you can see, and beyond your sight a continent, and the continent part of a globe, and the globe part of the solar system, and that a group in the starry universe, — so is your soul set in ever widening spheres.

You are enfolded, first, in other human lives, and in coming to consciousness of these you enlarge your sense of being. Nearest to you is some one person, — as the mother to her baby, or the husband and wife to one another. The happiness of our friends, John and Jenny, has its deepest source in the mutual consciousness and sharing of two lives. Every close friendship widens one's horizon. It is only a matter of education to find in every man and woman a friend, and in meeting each to enter a new chamber of the universal house. Just the casual touch, if it be kindly, has help and healing. "I was long in deep grief," writes some one, "and there were times when spiritual comfort and sense of the unseen failed me altogether; and in such desolate hours I have gone out on the street, and meeting one and another acquaintance stopped for friendly chat, and perhaps heard some story of personal experience, great or small, and when I returned home the soreness would be gone from my heart."

Digitized by Google

But humanity is not the only enfolding sphere. There are whole realms of knowledge, — of the material world, of the past of mankind, of its present working and future outlook. Every plant is an open book to the eyes trained to read it. That accomplished scientist, Peter Lesley, was asked, "When you look at a tree, do you see only the outside of it?" "No," he said, "within the bark I see the fibers and veins and the coursing sap and the whole interior life of the tree." Our children are getting more of that fine wisdom than did we oldsters, who were too often fated, as one said, "to get my head in a book at four years old and keep it there ever since." Yet even the book-world opens museums and treasuries beyond number. Writes Henry Kingsley: "All pangs except those of hunger may be forgotten in a book."

Then there is the sphere of beauty. (Yes, good Mr. Exact, this is a most unscientific classification; and humanity, knowledge, and beauty do not properly belong in the same category, as you justly observe, — but we don't mind.) The wonder of this world of beauty is that it is always present. Music, books, conversation, — these pleasures are only occasional, but beauty is with us always. As I lift

Digitized by Google

my eyes from the page they fall on a bunch of jonquils — the lovely things! Here in the dead of winter they are as graceful, as satisfying in pure color, as fragrant with delicate, earthy perfume, as April or May will show. The florist's windows are now the forerunners of the gardens, with their wealth of azaleas and daffodils and narcissus and pinks. Almost as winning to the eye are the plants in many a window of humble houses, their cheerful green lighted here and there by the blossoms of geranium or primrose. A week or two, and some boy will bring home the first pussy willows. Another month, and some happy explorer will light on the dear little hepaticas. And then the anemones, the bloodroot, and all the procession, till the earth laughs out in dandelions and scatters the houstonias over the pastures and piles the meadows with clover and ox-eye daisies. All that is coming soon, — and meantime our eyes must put up with trees and snowbanks and river and hills and clouds and sun and stars and human faces and other such trifles.

Come, when occasion permits, into the world of music. A wonderful world — full of meanings quite untranslatable into words. A musician has a gift of expression which other people

Digitized by Google

lack. Often a person quite dumb of speech, as to the higher thoughts and emotions, and capable of no other expression of the deep inner life, will convey through the voice or the violin or the piano subtle and beautiful and noble meanings. That shows the soul of the musician, — that, and not his lineaments or his conversation. Something in the structure of the vocal chords, some natural dexterity of muscle or some patient training, — and he can voice something in him and in us which else lies dumb and unconscious. Can it be that we all have hidden within us treasures of wisdom and emotion, which only a few can by some special gift awake and express, — this one by a trick of words and that one by a trick of voice or fingers? Perhaps that is the deepest charm of music or of poetry, and it is the silent thrush or bobolink in us that answers to the singer of the wood or the meadow.

That reality in man which we name religion finds a voice in music deeper than creed or sermon or ceremony. Come, in a Sunday twilight, where you can listen to a harmonious choir, to a soprano soaring pure and sweet as a bird, and to the organ, as under a master's hand it speaks with full power. Now it is Handel's

Digitized by Google

Largo, with its noble and majestic sweep. Now it is Guilmant's *Funeral March and Seraphic Chant*, — such solemn and tender strains as befit the laying to rest of a life lived grandly out; then, far-away, delicate, of unearthly sweetness, the angel's song; and at the close a strain that hushes to rest like a mother's lullaby. Ah, if one were but worthy of it, to have, when for him comes the end, the only service those two chants of the organ, played like that!

So the spheres widen on and on. There are all fine activities, all brotherly coöperative work; the homely neighborly kindness; the alliance for church service or for public ends; the place of each soldier in the companies and regiments and brigades that make up the army of humanity. Always there is the everyday toil, the hearty stroke of hammer or ax, the shrewd push of the needle, — and always the far sweep of sympathy and imagination, all round the world and forward through the ages. And all these are the natural sacraments through which speaks to man the Divine Grace, and in moments of extremity reveals itself to his need as a Presence and Power, intimate, responsive, sufficing.

Digitized by Google

Live in this larger world, and our own troubles fall into their proper insignificance — rather, their true significance as our opportunities and helps. Do you know, my friend and brother, that in the noblest sense, a sense too great for words, heaven lies all around you, and only asks entrance that it may fill your heart? Not a heaven dreamed of as exemption from toil and pain, but a heaven of beauty and love and strong triumphant life. It is not something to be believed and doubted by turns, not a power enthroned far-off or a possibility beyond death, but a present reality of power and joy. In your best moments you have tasted it. You may read its witness in human faces, — this man's, "like a life-boat"; this woman's, the home of peace. And not only is heaven a reality, — hell is real not less. In other faces you may see its traits. In moments of weakness, treachery, despair, you may have felt its power. To drive it out of self and out of the world — to enter into heaven, and help the world to enter — is what you and I are here for.

Digitized by Google

AN AFTER-DINNER GUEST

THROUGH the smoke-wreaths of my after-dinner cigar, as I sat beside my fire, there appeared the face and form of a visitor. He was jocund yet serene of aspect. In his countenance there was a blending of the jollity of Santa Claus with the tranquillity of the great Japanese image of Buddha. When he spoke, his voice suggested the resonance that lingers after the striking of a cathedral bell, and recalled the humming of bees in a full-blossoming crab-apple tree. Thus he said: —

"I am the great god Nicotinus, — I am the Spirit of Tobacco. These many years I have known you as my devout and temperate worshiper. I have breathed upon you a daily hour of comfort and calm. While the incense floated up to me, the tension of thought and labor has relaxed, cares have been forgotten, and a benignity of mind and body has enwrapped you.

"What memories I could evoke, beginning with our first acquaintance! You were in mid-life, you had encountered a time of keen anx-

Digitized by Google

iety and suspense, and just then, as it seemed by chance (but we divinities know better), an acquaintance had playfully tempted you into an occasional cigarette. You found in that the key to a daily quarter-hour of relief from the pressure on heart and brain, which gave fresh hope and courage. Long, long past are those days of storm and stress, and since then, whatever weather has frowned or shone, you have gratefully received my benison. The cigarette soon gave place to a cigar, and a single cigar taken at leisure after the day's work was done has been your 'open sesame' to tranquillity.

"Always I have brought you rest, and sometimes inspiration. Under my influence petty animosities have melted away, and imaginary mountains of difficulty have vanished. I have made a bridge from the day's toil to the evening's freedom and the night's repose. Sometimes my breath has wakened seed-thoughts into blossom or wafted quaint conceits. Memorable is the first cigar after an illness, — its sweetness enhanced by the consciousness of a recovered faculty, and the rounding out of the normal self into completeness.

"Is it sweetness that I bestow, or fragrance? Both and more than both. My province is the

Digitized by Google

border-line between sense and spirit. No mere physical pleasure is so subtle and ethereal as mine.

"Consider the boon I have given to the modern tribe of eager and hurrying mortals. I was revealed to your folk just when the Middle Ages were breaking into the rush of modern times. The Indians knew me. They paid solemn tribute to my divinity. The pipe was to them the symbol and agent of peace. They gave to the white man tobacco and Indian corn, and he repaid them with gunpowder and fire-water. It was that fine hero and gentleman, Sir Walter Raleigh, who made me known to the European people. It was a time of upheavals and wars, with breaking up of the old order and chaotic struggles of the new, when, almost unperceived, my peaceful influence began to calm the feverish pulse and take the edge from passion. Since then at what a pace, faster and still faster, have you mortals rushed on, — with your revolutions and agitations, your steam, electricity, radium, socialism, anarchism, multimillionairism, and all the rest. Where would you have landed, — or exploded or submerged yourselves, — save that amid the tumult there have circled my unnumbered cloudlets of calm?

Digitized by Google

Diplomatists looking with knotted brows across their council-board take a smoke together, and the pen writes peace instead of war. How much tobacco, think you, was burned during the sittings of that joint high commission which nobly ended the ominous dispute between America and Britain by the Treaty of Washington?

"The hurried business man relaxes over his evening cigar, and forgets his cares long enough to get strength to master them. The weary doctor sinks into his chair, and his eyes rest on the wife's serene face as her deft fingers ply their task of needlework or touch the piano-keys; and the crackle of the match that lights his pipe is the signal before which the shapes of pain and fear fade from his thoughts, and he tastes the true lotus land which only warriors know. Just as night comes graciously upon the world and lulls it to repose, so from me a soft cloud floats constantly upon the hot and hurrying children of men, and laps them for a little in care-freedom.

"Well I know that my worship has its zealots and fanatics, its abuses and mischiefs. What religion has not? Was there ever a deity, however pure and exalted, as his true worshipers

Digitized by Google

knew him, who was not invoked to countenance follies, cruelties, deviltries? Just so all manner of perversions and excesses are practiced by some of my devotees. There is the gluttonous smoker — millions of him — who steeps himself in tobacco, deadening all its finer joys, sapping his fiber, coarsening and weakening his physique and morals. There is the selfish smoker, — millions of him, too, — who so takes his own pleasure as to annoy his neighbor. And there is the boy smoker, wasting in advance his capital of power and enjoyment. Yes, tobacco, like religion, like freedom, like every other good gift, is constantly perverted and misused.

"Of my wise and temperate worshipers, not poor or mean is the bliss. I am the genius both of society and of solitude. I bring strangers into kindly touch. A group sitting in silence will when I am invoked break into genial talk as smoldering coals leap into flame. Says Thackeray: 'Honest men with pipes or cigars in their mouths have great physical advantages in conversation. You may stop talking if you like — but the breaks of silence never seem disagreeable, being filled up by the puffing of the smoke — there is no awkwardness in resuming the

Digitized by Google

conversation — no straining for effect — sentiments are delivered in a grave, easy manner — the cigar harmonizes the society, and soothes at once the speaker and the subject whenever he converses.'

"Yet to the solitary is my friendship most precious. No one is really alone who has around him the unseen presence of loved ones, and to summon those blessed shadows I am a powerful magician. No outward world is so real, no press of company is so companionable, as a man's inner world when it moves and glows and palpitates with thought and fancy, — and my torch is potent to kindle that flame.

"I am at home everywhere — from palace to gypsy tent or bivouac under the sky. King Edward smoked royal cigars, and they played their part in helping him to his kingly rôle of peacemaker of Europe. But he did not relish his imperial perfecto so keenly as many a bricklayer or hod-carrier enjoys the pipe he contentedly puffs in his noon hour of rest or when the day's work is done. I am the friend and comforter of the poor man. Dear am I to the dweller in the open, — to the hunter, the explorer, the soldier. Delicious is the fragrance around the camp-fire. The harder the march,

Digitized by Google

the more difficult the quest, the more rewarding is the evening hour at my shrine. Even those saddest of men, the captives in jails and prisons, are coming to be allowed a taste of my bounty, —happy sign that a prison is ceasing to be designed for the purpose of making men miserable.

"In many a life-picture of these later centuries you will find my spark aglow. It goes with the heroes of action and the dreamer of the study. On the field of Königgrätz, at a critical moment, Von Moltke coolly picks from the Crown Prince's proffered case the best cigar, — and the Prince, noting his composure, takes heart of grace! Charles Lamb stimulates his charming fancies and warms his generous heart with the mystic weed. 'I vow and believe,' exclaims Thackeray, 'that the cigar has been one of the greatest creature-comforts of my life — a kind companion, a gentle stimulant, an amiable anodyne, a cementer of friendship. May I die if I abuse that kindly weed which has given me so much pleasure!" Good Sir Walter Scott sits with his after-dinner cigar and tumbler when the faithful Lockhart comes to summon him to face his financial troubles. Lowell finds his muse most kindly when he

Digitized by Google

woos her through smoke. Imagine Uncle Toby without his pipe! As soon separate him from Corporal Trim.

"These are the merest glints and glimpses from my vast and memorable history. There is a legend which carries back my reign to the earliest days of mankind. The story runs that Adam and Eve, after their expulsion from Eden, still sometimes received angelic visitors. To them on a day appeared one of these heavenly guests, and addressed them thus: 'Children of Earth, in each hand I bear a gift for one of you, and you are to make your choice. The one gift is a virtue and goodness better than the common. The other is a magic herb which banishes care and uplifts the spirit. Which does each of you choose?' Adam hastened to speak; 'Eve, I want you to have the best; so I will take the herb.' And ever since then, woman has had a goodness superior to man's, — but man has had tobacco.

"I do not know what your critics and sages will make of this legend. But is there any reason in the nature of things why man should be content with a lower kind of goodness than woman's? By all means let him try to be as good as she is. And on the other hand why

Digitized by Google

should woman — but I leave you to complete the thought for yourself.

"You know by long experience how sane and sweet are the pleasures I dispense. Consider, too, of what I am the symbol. I am an instance and a type of blissful rest of body and spirit. That gift in manifold forms great Mother Nature offers to her children. In her magic rhythm, repose alternates with energy. As your Emerson tells you, she says to the too strenuous reformer as he comes out under her stars, 'Why so hot, my little sir?' And obeying her voice, and drinking of her peace, he returns fresh-armed for the manly strife. See the cat blinking luxuriously beside the fire, the embodiment of repose, — into what an incarnation of vigor will she turn when her foe or her prey comes in sight! Look at the sea gull floating on balanced wings, — mark the blending of present calm and potential energy. The ocean sometimes laps the shore like a creature half-asleep, just whispering, just opening and retracting its finger-tips, — its splendors and sublimities lulled in midday repose. So, on an October day, the earth dreams over her year's achievement, amid the ripened and garnered harvests, the mellowed foliage, the haze on

Digitized by Google

forest and hill, the slumberous sunshine. Child, learn so to yield yourself to the enfolding peace!"

I was roused by the snapping in two of a log on the andirons; I leaned forward to "put de noses er de chunks tergedder," as Uncle Remus says; and when I looked up the vision was gone.

Digitized by Google

A PORTRAIT AND A MAN

As one enters the Springfield Institution for Savings, he sees upon the wall a portrait of Henry S. Lee. The man himself seems to be looking at you. The traits we knew so well are there, the kindness, the quiet alertness, the twinkle of humor, the readiness to put himself at your service. The characteristics too subtle and delicate to be put into words are in the face. That face expresses even more than was habitually seen in a single look of the living man. The consummate art of the painter has gathered the essential quality of heart and mind, as it expressed itself in act and word and look, and has painted a face as in those rare moments when the soul looks through it. Art has no higher achievement than this, of expressing with a few pigments the ideal self of man or woman.

How the man himself comes back as we look! He might be standing in his familiar place close by, and we imagine him saying, "Well, Mrs. Blank, what can I do for you?" Perhaps Mrs. Blank is an old Irishwoman who has lost her bankbook, and suspects her fellow lodger of

Digitized by Google

stealing it, and wants Mr. Lee to make things right. Perhaps it is a woman urging the question which every banker dreads, "How can I invest my little property to get the most interest with the best security?" Or the caller may be a debtor to the bank who has fallen behind and comes to plead for further grace. Perhaps it is a widow, with a story of a wayward son, who urges that Mr. Lee should act as his guardian. In the anteroom are waiting two or three other applicants. On Mr. Lee's desk lies a pile of unopened letters, and in an hour he has an appointment to examine a piece of real estate. Every comer is met with perfect courtesy and full attention to his case. Perhaps, if he overstays a reasonable time, he finds himself somehow politely attended to the door, and then on the other side of the door, dismissed too graciously for offense.

Where did he find time for it all? If one had asked, Who carry the heaviest business responsibilities in the town? among the first would have been named this custodian of some sixteen million dollars, the property of forty thousand depositors, most of them poor people; the money to be handled so as to yield a safe and sure return at the market rate. And he

Digitized by Google

took most of the load on his own shoulders. Yet if it had been asked, What person is most ready to hear and help every one who is in trouble or perplexity, from the hungry (and thirsty) tramp to the embarrassed millionaire? there was but one man to name.

How did he cover it all? And he carried such an air of tranquillity. One who was associated with him in an executorship says, "I used to go to him for counsel whenever I ran against a snag, and whether the difficulty was great or small, I not only got the right word, but I always went away feeling cheered, — the world looked brighter when I left his office than when I entered it." That was the common experience. If he had only told the recipe by which he kept himself at the height of efficiency and at the same time so sunny-hearted! But the last thing he did was to talk about himself. If we might guess at his secret, may it have been that, besides a steady temperament by nature, besides a lifelong self-control, he was also free in a singular degree from selfish aims and purposes? Perhaps our worries and disquietude come mainly from undue concern for our own loss and gain.

However this may be, he seemed to have the

Digitized by Google

whole of himself to give away. And he wanted no return except to see others happy. If gratitude came, so much the better, but he did not count on it. One of his helpers in a wide field of mercy said, "You don't get many thanks," and he answered, with a twinkle in his black eyes, "We must spread out what thanks we do get to cover the whole." He shrank from praise as most people shrink from blame, and hid his charities as we hide our faults. So the greater part of his life was out of sight, and never will be revealed, — the seed went under ground, and those who saw the harvest saw not the buried grain from which it sprang.

The single deeds of service might be hidden, but the man himself was known through and through, and the place he held in the community was unique. Yet he lacked the titles to renown which seem on the surface of things to win regard. He rarely held public office. He did not accumulate wealth. As for military glory, why, he never killed so much as one man; doubtful if he ever killed an animal! He was not eloquent, nor a wit; he wrote no book; he was no athlete; he took few honors of any sort. He was just an upright business man, and everybody's friend, that was all.

Digitized by Google

An upright business man, and see what in that capacity he accomplished, standing in the place he did! He was the chief officer of a savings bank. That is an institution characteristic of the community in which he was nurtured, — the community to which, and to the ancestry from which he sprung, he owed much of what he was. The savings bank is a production of the last century, begun in Great Britain, quickly transplanted to Massachusetts, New York, and Pennsylvania, and playing now an immense part in the industrial life of most of the northern states. It is a great incentive and reward of thrift. No private gain accrues to its managers; their salaries are modest; often, as in Mr. Lee's case, far below the market value of the man. They are safeguarded by legislation, carefully wrought out and maintained. In their administrations first-class business skill is put almost gratuitously at the service of the wage-earner; he has the highest security for his savings, and he gets a good rate of interest.[1] Think what it means, in the case of this one bank, — forty thousand depositors, most of them of small

[1] All this was written of the private institutions organized under State laws: the postal savings banks later established by the Federal Government are on somewhat different lines.

Digitized by Google

means, with an average of four hundred dollars, — safely kept, wisely managed, and with large outlay of judgment and enterprise; earning a small but steady increment. And the whole business pivots on the fidelity and intelligence of a very few men. There are other banks equally good; the State is dotted with them. Among his class Henry Lee was exceptional only in the magnitude of the interest he handled; his integrity and financial honor were typical of a host of men, the bone and sinew of the business world.

But quite beyond his business responsibilities, and peculiar to himself, at least in degree, was his perpetual service in personal ways. Every one went to him and no one was repulsed. He had to employ helpers to sift applications and administer his bounty. Says one of these: "An applicant could hardly be so unworthy as not to get at least a little help, but my special business was to thoroughly understand each case and know how much and in what way to assist. He always tried to keep his name unknown, until I had to tell him that I myself was getting credit that did n't belong to me and he must take some of it." If every one whom he helped, with money, or by finding

Digitized by Google

work, or by fatherly advice, or by good influence, could tell his story, it would make a rich volume, — a Golden Treasury.

He was helper to numbers of forlorn women, to men of all classes, but especially to young men. Many a young fellow went to him with his troubles or his wrong-doing as to a father-confessor. His Sunday-school classes should have a chapter of their own. His relations with the students of the Young Men's Christian Association Training School were very close; his visits, his gifts, the banquets he provided, the meetings he shared. Walking in the Eastern Avenue district one summer day, he noticed the boys roaming the streets with no good outlet for their energy, which easily overflowed into mischief. Other folks have observed the same thing, but he did not stop with observing it. At his own expense he engaged a professional teacher of gymnastics, who spent every day through the vacation season on the athletic grounds of the Training School, with all the boys who chose to come, teaching them games and leading them in wholesome play, including swimming in the Watershops Pond. What he began, others carried on.

To the volunteers of the Spanish war he was

Digitized by Google

in his own person a whole relief corps. From the day when the first wounded man was returned from Cuba, he set himself to meet the needs of the boys as they came back. He made it his business that no sick or wounded soldier of the Massachusetts Second Regiment should be left in distant camp or hospital; they must all be brought home. He detailed from his office force one or two young men to attend solely to them; he made frequent journeys to the camps and cities; he spent his money without stint; he thought and did for them all as a father might do for his son. Fastidious and personally sensitive as he was, he would on occasions manipulate and rub a suffering man like a hospital nurse. After the American troops had gone to the Philippines, he followed them with gifts. For two whole nights he worked in providing Christmas boxes to be sent there, examining everything that went in, each book and magazine, to be sure it was the right thing.

At the close of the Cuban war, a service was held one Sunday afternoon in the City Hall. Mr. Lee sat back and out of sight on the platform. The last speaker closed with a eulogy of the soldier's friend, and at last named Henry

Digitized by Google

Lee, upon which the whole audience broke out in loud applause. He slipped out, and, much agitated, took refuge in his private stronghold at the bank. Then in great excitement he turned to his friend and exclaimed, "F., are those people making a fool of me?" He was completely mystified, — there was some mistake! So absolutely unconscious was he of anything in himself out of the common.

The stirring scenes of the war time only brought out in stronger relief than usual the essential and constant quality of the man. So self-effacing was he, one could not but wonder, and wonder still, as to the side of his life which he never revealed. Griefs, losses, disappointments, he must have had, but he never told them. Was any man or woman so intimate as ever to hear from his lips of any troubles of his own? Struggles with self there must have been, but no one saw or guessed. In his office hung a placard, "Don't worry." Did he ever, like the rest of us, have to admonish himself thus? Behind that steady, genial face was the strong will sometimes holding down the rising anger or fear? A lonely man we could not imagine him, who was everybody's friend; and yet no children or wife had he, no such household warmth

Digitized by Google

as for most of us keeps the heart aglow. A kind of shyness held him a little apart from general society. He had simple and healthy tastes; he loved flowers; his garden was a pleasure to him; the brilliant azalea in his window told the earliest news of coming spring. Sometimes he kept a dog, — if one were to be a dog, one would have liked Henry Lee for a master!

His religion expressed itself chiefly in deeds. He was more than loyal to the church; he was active in its aggressive work, which for him meant carrying organized brotherhood and cheer to barren and empty lives, and giving to them some substantial message of hope and faith. He was not one of those who can freely voice their deeper experiences. But memory comes back of a young people's prayer-meeting, some forty or more years ago. A young man of fine character and promise, Erastus Hayes, had just died of consumption. Henry Lee spoke with deep feeling of his friend, and, scarcely able to control his voice, repeated the hymn he had spoken in his last hours: —

One sweetly solemn thought
Comes to me o'er and o'er,
I am nearer my home to-day
Than ever I've been before.

. . . . . .

Digitized by Google

Let me feel Thee near, when my feet
Are slipping over the brink,
For it may be I'm nearer my home,
Nearer now than I think.

In his busy, cheerful life there came a time when his physician told him that a disease was fastened on him which must sooner or later bring the end. He went right on with his work, leaning on no one for help, free from acute suffering, but liable to sudden ebbs of strength. Only by the most delicate assiduity could his nearest friends guard him against over-fatigue and exposure. He seemed to be too little aware of himself to remember any necessity of care. One night he was at a Masonic gathering. One need not be a Mason to know what that society meant to him; how to that as to the church and every social institution he gave the highest interpretation; to him Masonry must have meant honest and worthy work, good fellowship, loyal service. There, in the midst of friends and comrades, fell on him the stroke of paralysis. For days and nights he lay helpless, while the whole town mourned and watched like one family. On the street one caught fragments of talk: "He was in a class by himself"; "He has been like a father to me"; "If he dies, I shall

Digitized by Google

feel as if I must begin my life over again." What thoughts were in his mind? One glimpse was given. To a friend, a musician, he had promised certain valuable aid, and the friend spoke of this to some one as a thing which now could never be, but as an evidence of his kindness. Once as he lay speechless and almost motionless, his hand struggled to show something, the fingers feebly moving up and down. The physician beside him caught the clue: "Playing the organ keys? You mean Mr. ——? You want that plan carried out?" Yes, the face looked assent; and he knew that the promise would be kept. That was the last look of him that was given to us, and it was turned to a friend to help.

The Catholic Church has a practice of enrolling certain holy men and women as saints. It is believed that their good works and their intercessions avail for the benefit of those in need. This purpose they surely serve, that the contemplation of such beautiful souls is a stay and inspiration to all who know of them. How great a treasure to the world, for example, are the remembered lives of the three saints who bear the name of Francis. There was he of Assisi, who taught afresh to men the gospel of pure and

Digitized by Google

simple love embracing all creation; whose hymns sang praise for "our brother the sun, our sister the moon, our mother the earth"; and of whose charity some one said, "He remembers those whom God himself has forgotten." Then there was Saint Francis de Sales, the good bishop of Geneva, so wise and helpful in the highest conduct of life that his sayings still enrich Protestant manuals of devotion. And then, Saint Francis Xavier, the heroic missionary to the East, in whom were embodied the virtues of Jesuitism without its faults, and whose life was spent indeed according to the Jesuit motto, "for the greater glory of God," and the service of men. And there are hundreds of others, some on the Catholic roll of honor, some on the scrolls of all religions and races, of whom the names and memories are among the best possessions of mankind.

We have our own private saints. Each individual heart has its own; those whom it has known, admired, reverenced, and to whom it turns in the hour of need and in the hour of thanksgiving. So each nation, each community, each neighborhood, has its special heroes, prophets, saviors. Sometimes they have monuments and statues, sometimes they have none

Digitized by Google

and need none. Our Connecticut Valley, beautiful with its river and mountains, fair with woods and fields, is an outward scene and setting in which the real actors and presences are the human souls that live and have lived here. We have our own saints and our own shrines. Churches and halls and monuments serve a purpose of commemoration. But here in the heart of the busy world, close to the noisy street, is the eloquent likeness of one who among these vaults and ledgers lived his strong and beautiful life, and was a fountain of refreshment to the needy, and wrought out a noble manhood. To the young men whom he trained and who caught his spirit, and to those who shall come after them; to the men of business swimming in the strong current of material interests; to the poor, to whom he made himself a brother as did his Master — to all of these his face speaks messages which each can best interpret for himself.

Digitized by Google

A SOLDIER OF VIRGINIA

WHEN the world was young, — "a many years ago," — every Yale man knew the name and fame of Bob Stiles of '59. He was a race-crew man, and reputed to be the strongest man in college. He took the De Forest gold medal, given for the best oration written and delivered by a Senior, an honor which then ranked as high — incredible though this may seem to the present generation — as now does the captaincy of the football team. Beyond these special attainments he was esteemed as a royal good fellow. He was also very stiff in his convictions. He founded a Freshman society, Gamma Nu, on the principle of openness as opposed to the secrecy of the other Greek-letter Societies; and its members encountered a hostility as bitter as it was unjust. True to his convictions, he declined an election to Skull and Bones, — a self-denial which only a Yale man can appreciate. He graduated with every promise of a brilliant future. But then came the Civil War, and Stiles, a Virginian, threw himself heart and soul into the cause of the South, at first as a private

Digitized by Google

soldier, and rising to be a major of artillery. Stories sometimes floated to his old friends at the North of his characteristic traits. It was told of him that at the battle of Malvern Hill his company was obliged to stand inactive under a fire so heavy that the men grew unsteady and a rout seemed impending. Suddenly a rabbit started up, and Stiles seized the chance for a diversion. "Boys!" he shouted, "there goes Molly Cottontail: let's catch her!" The soldiers joined in the chase, and Molly was soon captured. The men had forgotten their fear for a minute, and with freshened spirits settled down to face it out.

After the war Stiles was reported as firm as ever in his Southern principles, and totally unreconstructed. He was believed to share the attitude of a favorite song of that time and section, beginning —

> Oh, I'm a good old rebel,
> And that's just what I am;
> And for this glorious Union
> I do not care — at all!

He passed into serviceable though obscure civil life. And now there comes from him a book, the story of his campaigning, — *Four Years under Marse Robert* (Neale Publishing

Digitized by Google

Company). There is in the book no word of politics: it is just the account of the writer's own experiences in the Army of Northern Virginia, with an outline of the large military operations, and with the spirit and atmosphere made vivid by all sorts of anecdotes, tragic, heroic, humorous, pathetic, religious. The book is first of all "a rattling good story." It stirs no controversy, it is thoroughly human, and it will be read with quickened pulses by old wearers of the gray or the blue, and hardly less by men who have never seen a shot fired in anger.

The writer gives briefly and frankly the motive which sent him into the war. Slavery, he says, had nothing to do with it for him: his family's slaves had long before been given their freedom. (Lee, by the way, had freed his slaves.) Stiles was, like most Virginians, warmly devoted to the Union, and opposed to secession. But, when the United States government proposed to invade and subdue the seceding states, Virginia was instantly united in resistance. In the presence of invading armies the supreme thought of every man was "to defend his own hearthstone." And, as the Southern volunteer hastened to the front in the spring

Digitized by Google

of '61 he felt "With me is Right, before me is Duty, behind me is Home."

To the book itself the reader must turn for stirring stories, which can hardly be even sampled here: we can only note one or two of its broad characteristics. The title is significant. "Marse Robert" — Robert E. Lee — was the idol of the army that he led; its confidence in him was a mainspring of its courage and power; and his lofty character was an ideal and inspiration. General and army reacted on each other, and became an almost invincible force. The opposing Army of the Potomac fought its way to final triumph under the disadvantage of changes of commander so frequent that no such personal sentiment could grow up: there were in turn McDowell, McClellan, Pope, Hooker, Burnside, Meade, and Grant. Major Stiles gives excellent sketches of Lee's lieutenants, — Jackson, Johnston, Longstreet, Ewell, Hill, Early, and others. His story is rich in pictures of striking characters in humbler stations. The best side of war, the manhood it develops and displays, the moral discipline, the comradeship, the sacrifice, have seldom been better told. Some of these chivalrous captains and nameless heroes of the ranks are finer than Kip-

Digitized by Google

ling's. The grim and brutal side of war too is given in glimpses; but the softening light of memory has toned down the effect, and we get perhaps an idealized view of the whole. In truth, Major Stiles is not only a hero-worshiper, but a thorough idealist, and his service is in showing us the Southern cause through an idealist's eyes. This is well; and it need not bar out the weighty after-thoughts, — that the war traces back to slavery as its real source, and also that war is essentially a hellish business and the worst possible way of redressing a wrong.

The prominence of the distinctly religious element in the picture of army life is remarkable. Northerners, even in the midst of the deadly and bitter struggle, recognized and honored the Puritan religion of Stonewall Jackson. One of the best of the Southern war-poems pictures him, —

> Attention all! Kneel down! Hats off!
> Old Stonewall's going to pray!

Jackson's type of religion was more typical of the South than of the North. The South was and is the last stronghold of genuine, old-fashioned orthodox theology; and the special type of personal experience and character which was

Digitized by Google

the best fruit of that creed is shown in various and striking manifestations in this story of Lee's army. Here we see the popular revival, with its waves of emotion; the personal struggle, resistance, submission, and joyful emergence; the spiritual warfare inwrought with the scenes of peril, horror, and death. One longs to quote in full the story given by "a great, broad-shouldered, double-jointed son of Anak, with a head like the Farnese Jove," who told his comrades "what a merciful, forgiving being the Lord is, and to do that I've got to tell you what a mean-spirited liar I am." They all knew the bad life he had led. When the minies were singing and the shells bursting, "I told the Lord that I was sorry and ashamed of myself, and, if he'd cover my head this time, we'd settle the thing as soon as I got out." Danger past, all was forgotten. Another deadly battle. He remembered his broken promise, and his coward heart stopped beating. He told the Lord he had lied, and maybe ought n't to be believed. "But I don't want to go to hell, and I'm serious and honest this time; and, if you do hear me now, we'll meet just as soon as I get out, and we certainly will settle things." Another escape, another forgotten promise,

Digitized by Google

then a battle worse than all before. He cried for mercy. "But I won't promise, for fear I should lie. It's all in your hands, Lord, — hell or mercy. I've got no more time to talk any more about it. I've got to go on killing Yankees. But, O Lord,—no, I dares n't, I dares n't; for I won't lie any more, I won't go down there with a fresh lie on my lips; but, O Lord! O Lord!" And so all day long. When it was over, "I just took out and ran as hard as ever I could into the deep, dark woods, where God and me was alone together; and I threw my musket down on the ground, and I went right down too myself on my knees, and cried out, 'Thank you, Lord! thank you, Lord! But I'm not going to get up off my knees until everything 's settled between us'; and neither I did n't, brethren. The Lord never held it over me at all, and we settled it right there."

One lays down the book, and looks back fifty years, and wonders. We thought then these people were about as bad as could be. They were rebels and traitors. They were killing our brothers that they might have liberty to hold and abuse their slaves. And they thought just as ill of us. We were invaders, tyrants: we were bent on destroying their homes

Digitized by Google

and ruining their country, that we might hold them in base subjection, and give the negroes ascendency over the whites. They and we know each other better now. It is no longer "they" and "we"; it is all "we," — children of a common country. But shall we not learn something from our old mistake? Shall we not see that the civil strife, while in one aspect it was the clash of two diverse societies and the consequence of the organized and aggressive wrong of slavery, — that it was also, as between typical Northerner and Southerner, a great misunderstanding? And shall we not put that belated lesson to use, by schooling ourselves to more justice and charity in the social strifes of to-day? Shall we not learn to see behind the repellent figures of the labor agitator and the monopolist deeper and nobler forces, and to know that hostility between rich man and poor man is as senseless as was the mutual hate of Northerner and Southerner?

Out of that fierce and awful turmoil there emerge in the retrospect certain triumphant ideas, certain heroic figures. One of those figures is Robert E. Lee. He never was greater, never was he so serviceable, as when, sheathing his sword, he put behind him all bitterness and

Digitized by Google

all repining for what was hopelessly lost, and set the example of devotion to the arts of peace. Lee at the head of the Army of Northern Virginia was all that our author paints him, but still higher do we place Lee as he led the greater army of the entire South in building upon the ruins a new and nobler civilization.

The greatest belong to all. Lee is ours, — the North's as well as the South's. Lincoln is ours, — the South's as well as the North's. The words of his last appeal should be the nation's guiding star in its new perils and struggles, "with malice toward none, with charity for all"; "with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right."

In Major Stiles's story there is no drop of bitterness. He lets the curtain fall when at the end of the fighting he is taken prisoner, to spend a half-year in captivity. The prisoner's lot, with the fresh memory of a lost cause, could have been no happy one; but, if there was suffering, he spares us that. One parting glimpse of him is characteristic. With the other prisoners — he was on Johnson's Island — he was offered release in the following autumn, conditional only on a very searching and comprehensive oath of allegiance, abjuring

Digitized by Google

"the heresy of secession," and pledging patriotic devotion to the Union. He declined to take his freedom on those terms: he could pledge himself as to actions, but not as to convictions and sentiments. Our friend, it will be seen, was something of what the world calls a Quixote. But he did accept a thirty-days parole, and then, seeing for himself how completely lost was the Confederate cause, took without hesitation the ordinary oath of allegiance.

Not Yale men only will be interested in the fortunes of his De Forest gold medal. A rather clumsy piece of gold, worth one hundred dollars, he saved a bit of it as a trinket for his mother, and, as he went into the war, gave the rest at a friend's suggestion, to be invested in cotton, and then forgot it. Six months after Appomattox, as he was working in a corn-field in the late twilight, a rider brought him a letter: it was an accounting for his investment of five years before, and an inclosure of three hundred and fifty dollars. That enabled him to exchange the corn-field for the law school.

Major Stiles puts a moral to his book, not in any discussion of history or politics, but in a sketch of the ideal of soldierly character. It is finely conceived and expressed, drawn from a

Digitized by Google

realistic experience and inspired by lofty sentiment. This chapter on the soldier-life should alone give the volume a place, which by its entire contents it well deserves, on the library shelves of West Point and of every military school and other colleges and schools as well. The significance of the book lies not solely in the years 1861–65, but in the present. It speaks of hostilities conquered and buried, of old friendships restored, of the white flower of peace full-blossomed from the dark soil of war. Its author and his readers, South and North, stand together to face the duties and responsibilities of American citizenship. The present is ours, the future is ours. And for the past: —

Under the sod and the dew,
Waiting the Judgment Day,
Love and tears for the Blue,
Tears and love for the Gray.

Digitized by Google

A MODERN APOSTLE

[1894.] In the wonderful work of modern philanthropy there has been perhaps no enterprise more original in its principles and more beneficent in its results than the Children's Aid Society of New York, as it was founded and conducted by Charles L. Brace. He planted it when the tide of upper-class materialism and lower-class vice ran more unchecked in New York than it runs to-day. He and a few kindred spirits were the pioneers in that movement, uniting religious ardor with scientific wisdom, which is now coping so widely with the worst of our social ills, and promises to overcome them. When he died, that sober judge, the *Evening Post*, said of him: "He had every quality for philanthropic work; clear insight, perfect sanity of judgment, supreme diligence and indomitable patience, from whence it resulted that he became a master of his vocation and of world-wide reputation." The story of what the man did and was is now before us in *The Life of Charles Loring Brace, chiefly told in his own letters.* (Scribners). It is a portrayal

Digitized by Google

even more of what he was than of what he did, and to the service he wrought for humanity there is now added the knowledge of a personality whom the reader welcomes as a friend, and whom the world may well keep as one of its inspirations.

Mr. Brace's character was so symmetrical that it hardly tempts to analysis, but we may perhaps characterize his most unique and original contribution to the new science of humanity. It lay in the perception that society must be saved through its children, and that a child is best saved by a home. In the recognition of childhood as the time for salvation, and salvation by natural means, he was in line with the most advanced thought of modern times. Christ's pregnant and repeated teaching that to children belongs the entrance into the kingdom, seems to have found its full development and apprehension only within the last century or so. Rousseau and Froebel were apostles of that gospel. Bushnell and Jacob Abbott were among its American teachers; Elizabeth Peabody brought Froebel's message to America; the establishment of free public kindergartens, playgrounds, swimming-pools, is its latest advance. But it belonged to Mr. Brace to make

Digitized by Google

an application of this principle in a field where few or none had trod, and by a method in one aspect simple and in another audacious. He planned to transplant the street children of New York into the country homes of good families. We are so familiar with the successful process that we do not at once realize how hopeless it may well have looked at first proposal. Put a street Arab in a farmer's family in Michigan! Would he not run away the next morning, after stealing all he could lay hands on? And the farmers — would they receive the human offscourings of the city, or if they did, would not the little waifs be roughly or ignorantly brought up? The result of the experiment showed what may be expected from human nature when it is rightly dealt with. The children gladly went, the farmers gladly received them, and almost always the issue was fortunate. Of all the children thus placed by the society — and carefully followed up by correspondence and visiting — not five per cent turned out badly, and of the young children less than three per cent. The society has placed almost a hundred thousand boys and girls in homes. Its method has been widely adopted in other countries, and the substitu-

Digitized by Google

tion of the home for the institution is becoming a cardinal principle of scientific charity.

This seems to us to have been the original discovery of Mr. Brace, but no claim of priority is urged by his biographer or himself — far other thoughts than of personal credit filled that ample brain and heart. The work of the society spread out in many other directions — newsboys' lodging-houses, evening schools, industrial schools, homes for girls, summer homes; it is estimated that in one way and another some half a million children have received its help, and its ideas have taken root in many undertakings besides its own. An army of wise allies and lieutenants and devoted workers gradually surrounded Mr. Brace — some of them began the work along with him — and he delighted in the obscure, heroic labors of hundreds of good women. The spirit and methods of his work are shown sufficiently for the purposes of a biography, while their fuller exhibition is to be found in the book which is doubtless his most vital addition to literature, *The Dangerous Classes of New York*. As he appears in the book before us, it is charming to see his personal interest and sympathy toward the individual street-child, — his ap-

Digitized by Google

preciation of the frequent pluck, generosity, self-reliance; his relish of the humor; his unflinching recognition of the depravity sometimes unveiled. Personal sympathy, broad planning, able administration — he combined them all.

We must refer to one other trait of character, because it shows the virtue which is least obviously connected with philanthropy. To active benevolence and warm faith he united great candor in the search for truth. He inherited the New England disposition to study the problem of man's spiritual destiny, he was versed in all the currents of modern thought, and he speculated with equal reverence and fearlessness on the fundamental questions. He faced the specters of the mind. He accepted evolution, — it is mentioned that he read Darwin's *Descent of Man* thirteen times,— and that he did not ignore the grave suggestion that man's spirit may share the lot of the lower animals. To him Christ was a spiritual presence and power, a guide and support; yet he saw the difficulties in the supernatural story, and was ready to surrender whatever reason should disprove. His ripest thinking on religion was expressed in two books of his later years: *Gesta Christi* — an exposition of the moral achieve-

Digitized by Google

ments of Christianity, as substantiating the leadership of its founder; and *The Unknown God* — the partial revelation made in all ages and under all creeds. His letters show some unsettled questions, some "unresolved nebulæ"; the mood is sometimes grave and wistful of fuller light. But it is a manly gravity, untouched by pessimism and incapable of despondency. What chance has despondency or pessimism with a man who is daily living the blessed life?

Most of the book's five hundred pages is made up of personal letters, and it is rarely that letters afford so complete and satisfactory a biography. These are woven together by a thread of modest and judicious narrative. The result is a symmetrical and vivid exhibition of a character singularly many-sided and attractive. It might well be studied as a text-book by whoever is interested in the most fascinating of sciences — the growth and building of noble character. One may note the Connecticut ancestry; the fortunate endowment of temperament; the wise father's training; his early discipline of the boy in that physical courage for want of which he himself had suffered; the influence of Yale College, where we are

Digitized by Google

shown young men drawn together by a common love of knowledge and pursuit of truth; the influence on the Hartford boy of Dr. Bushnell's preaching; the contact with the materialistic but stirring life of New York: the sorrow of bereavement; the education of travel and residence in German homes; the consecration to humanity in sympathy with suffering Hungary, and the experience of an Austrian dungeon; the instinctive drawing away from the charms of literature to his true vocation among the street Arabs. And then are sketched the influences of mature life — the many years of devoted service, the happy marriage, the rich and various friendships, the companionship of nature, the anti-slavery interest, the war time, the encounters with prejudice and calumny, the ever-widening thought, the confrontal of religious problems, the sympathy with every forward movement in politics and society, the beautiful home, the calm approach of sunset.

The editor has wisely spared some of the well-economized space — there is hardly a superfluous line in the volume — to letters of Mr. Brace's correspondents, and we thus get glimpses of a most interesting group, including

Digitized by Google

such people as Frederick Law Olmsted, Howard Potter, Theodore Parker, Florence Nightingale, Frances Power Cobbe, James Bryce, and Mozoomdar. The last named writes, on Mr. Brace's death, "Philosophy and philanthropy make the ideal of the modern Christian, and no one whom I have known conformed to that ideal more than my beloved departed friend."

We are especially grateful for the letters which give us glimpses of the happy family life. It was fitting that he whose lifework was to give homes to the homeless should have his own happiness enshrined in a domestic temple, peaceful and beautiful as the landscape of the Hudson upon which it looked down. Near the close, he writes to a friend — after recurring to some youthful enthusiasm — "Life has been happier than I expected, and the world of truth is more glorious even than I thought." And the effect of the self-forgetting life upon himself, the editor suggests by a word of comparison of the two portraits, — the intent, over-serious face at thirty, and the strong, serene, and genial countenance of the latest years.

It was the fit completion of an almost ideal life that a son should succeed to the work, and a daughter should prepare this biography.

Digitized by Google

A TALK WITH PHILLIPS BROOKS

[Jan. 24, 1893.] Now that our great prophet has been taken from our sight, I recall with fresh interest a talk I had with him some years ago. I went to him as a stranger, with a line of friendly introduction from his brother John,[1] simply for the pleasure of a personal conversation with him. As soon as I left him I jotted down what I remembered of his talk. His manner was perfectly simple and unprofessional, animated, without the haste of his pulpit utterance and without hesitation. There was much of the quality of his public speech — the same copiousness of thought, quickness of imagination,

[1] John Cotton Brooks was for many years the beloved rector of Christ Church in Springfield. He closely resembled his brother Phillips in purity and ardor of spirit and self-forgetting service. Active in all forms of ministerial work, his especial calling was among the toilers and the poor. In my remembrances of him I recall especially the friendly visits to his study — a room which in all its furnishings bespoke the high culture which showed in his talk. But the conversation almost invariably ran to the practical problems which lay near his heart, — how to help some poor girl with her fatherless baby, or to reunite and strengthen a divided and poverty-stricken family, or to get some derailed man back on to the track of straight living. Sympathetic burden-bearing was the very nature of the man.

Digitized by Google

and elevation of feeling. There was suggested an even wider range of interest and play of feeling than his sermons conveyed. His talk sparkled with a ready and racy humor, which seldom appeared in his preaching, — not, I imagine, from any intentional repression, but because the earnestness of his central purpose carried him out the region of humor.

Well may the American people mourn for him! He fed the deepest hunger of men, — the hunger for goodness and for joy. The note of joyfulness was one of his strongest characteristics. Perhaps we hardly distinguished or dwelt upon that, because his whole nature and effort were so strongly set toward that which is greater than joy — toward rightness, service, holiness. But his ardent goodness seemed to find, to create, to carry with it, an atmosphere of noblest cheer. He brought it so as to meet each special need of his hearers. The heart-broken found comfort in his words, the despairing found hope, the weak found strength, the lonely found love, the young man was beckoned by a fresher youth than his own, the strong man was inspired to transmute his strength into service, the happy heart found its melody of bliss interwoven into a celestial

Digitized by Google

harmony. He knew the pitfalls, the miseries, the hells of human life. It was as he saved men from those hells that he felt in himself the power of God unto salvation, and was lifted above doubt and fear.

His goodness impressed men as his central trait. Along with it went a rich vitality, which was fed and sustained as he drew freely from all the blameless joys which nature and humanity supply. He enjoyed pictures, music, mountains; he enjoyed rich-natured, warm-blooded men; he loved children; he loved play. He believed in God so thoroughly that he never felt the whole work of the world resting on his own shoulders, but could surrender himself, carefree and happy, to the passing pleasure of an idle hour.

Two kinds of men could never quite understand his position. Some of his devout fellow-churchmen did not comprehend how he could exchange the offices of fellowship with Unitarians and such queer cattle. And some of his Unitarian admirers rather wondered that having gone so far from the old theology he did not go a little farther. But the man was simple-hearted and sincere. Whatever embarrassments other men might have in trying to wholly

Digitized by Google

reconcile their hearts and their heads, he never seemed to feel any. His faith was of the simplest. He lived and had his being in a world of spiritual reality, not apart from this every-day world, but encompassing it, giving to the actual and visible sphere all its significance and glory, and revealed to men at every point where the actual situation is met with a loyal will and loving heart. The briefest creed that can be framed is a symbol too cold and complex for this faith, — it is as inadequate as an algebraical formula to convey Beethoven's fifth symphony. If one must phrase a creed for Phillips Brooks, it might be comprised in such familiar terms as the fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of men, and the holy life. The holy life, as he conceived and realized it, carries in itself a kind of foretaste and assurance of its own continuance. And this holy life, drawn from God, blending with God, destined to full fruition hereafter, had for him its consummate exemplification in Jesus Christ.

These were to him the vital ideas of religion, and he found these substantially expressed in the familiar and beloved liturgy of the Episcopal Church. If in that liturgy there are also elements which, to a man so modern as he,

Digitized by Google

were in a degree obsolete and unreal, they apparently were felt as little incumbrance to a nature like his, glowing with devotion, and only secondarily interested in logic and intellectual consistency. But he perfectly understood that men for whom his liturgy and his church were impossible lived essentially the same life of aspiration, communion, and service to which he was vowed, and he treated such men as his brothers, quite undisturbed by the terrified cacklings of ecclesiastical poultry yards.

Now we have lost his presence and voice, men say — and naturally — "the loss is irreparable." But I imagine a smile playing upon that heroic and saintly face, if he heard such words. When Mahomet lay dead, and his followers were grouped about his bier in unconsoled grief, one of them broke forth to the others, "Is it then Mahomet in whom we have believed, or the God of Mahomet?" And so doubtless our prophet would say to us — "Is it Phillips Brooks in whom you have believed, or the divine life of which a spark shone in him?"

He has left little in book-form, men say — no monument but a memory. But his Master

Digitized by Google

left not even a written line — and who says of him "*only* a memory"? The volumes of sermons, too, which remain to us, retain in a rare degree that vitality and power which they had when they were delivered, and of him beyond most orators it may be said that "being dead he yet speaketh." Better commemoration than any funeral pageant are the tears that fall to-day.

And if any external monument is needed, his is built already, — Trinity Church, the noblest church edifice in America. It was planned by one of Phillips Brooks's special friends, the architect Richardson. It was soon after Richardson's death that my call was made, and our talk reverted often to him. I give it just as it was written down — of course with a somewhat fragmentary and discursive effect. Naturally, too, it was the more serious parts of our talk that dwelt in memory, and the report hardly conveys the ease, the occasional playfulness, the readiness with which at a question or a remark he would strike into a new vein.

March 24, 1887. Called at his study at 10 A.M., the hour he had named. He was evidently writing a sermon.

Digitized by Google

"Oh no, I don't mind being interrupted. Sometimes an interruption helps, — it takes a man out of himself.

"I am glad to have this church affect by its beauty people who have no artistic culture. I think it does affect them. It is good for the Harvard students to dine in Memorial Hall.

"Vedder's drawings seem to me rather forced in their weirdness. No doubt, he has the real element in him, — a man's affectations are always developed from the basis of a real quality, — but I think he forces himself. His illustrations lack that touch of mockery which takes off from the crushing effect of Omar Khayyám — you feel that the writer is after all amusing himself a little with you.

"The antique art — like Richardson's — seems real. Our present artists seem to want to do something, and hunt to find it, — Howells, for instance. But Scott told his story because he had one to tell, and his only difficulty was to select from his store. All the other architects seemed to have an ungrudging admiration for Richardson.

"Richardson was all the time growing. I don't know what he might have done in twenty-five years. He grew toward simplicity,

Digitized by Google

and farther away from the prevailing prettiness. There was a great deal of the child in him. His whole life was in his art. Yet he would listen most sympathetically to talk on any subject, — even on metaphysics, though not a single abstract idea ever got into his head. He was utterly without interest in religion, except through this sort of sympathy. He had immense vitality. He had much ill health — a bad complication of diseases, but he lived above it, not so much by courage as by interest in other things. He would forget his pain in talking about architecture.

"He first planned this church with a second tower upon the first. The builder told him this would be too heavy for the foundation. He could n't devise anything, and we all got discouraged. Oue evening he came to the committee with the present plan, and said, 'The wonder is that a man who could plan *this* was ever content with *that*.'

"My own idea is that each person contains the germ of all attainments. I have no music, but I should not be surprised to become a musician some time. Richardson more than most men suggested this richness of possibility. He is religious *now!*

Digitized by Google

"I am unwilling to believe but that every man may attain the *conscious* spiritual life. False teaching, the inheritance from our grandfathers, and the like, disable men, — but these things shaken off, the spiritual sense may come — and one never knows when.

"This is the interest of teaching men, — the hope to rouse into life the dormant spiritual faculty. Oue must interpret men by man, — not too much by individual peculiarities. We must n't believe a man's business partner when he says, 'Oh, he's *John* — you can't get anything spiritual out of him,' — nor must we believe John himself when he says the same.

"I sometimes seem to speak home to individuals better when I simply know they are men. In my hour for seeing everybody, some one comes in whom I have known from childhood — and next a perfect stranger, who says: 'Mr. Brooks, years ago I heard you say so and so,' — and then expects me to talk, — and sometimes I can talk better to him than to the other.

"A minister's life is incomparably interesting. If a baby were offered his choice of a profession, — well, there's a great deal that is attractive, but I think simply as the most interesting

Digitized by Google

thing, a minister's place is to be chosen. This having people open themselves to you!

"I laugh when I hear business men talk as if a minister knew nothing of human nature — and I knowing things of their next-door neighbor that would amaze them! Business men are sometimes stupid in their own affairs. Say it is desired to buy some ground for a church. I would go straight to the owner and say, 'We will give just $20,000.' But oh no! that would be a minister's way! My wise man must get a third party to sound the owner, then offer him $15,000 and he in response will ask $25,000, and so on, and I know all the while the end will be giving $20,000.

"Does my contact with people impress me more with the attractiveness of human nature, or throw me back on faith in God as the only resource? But the two things are inseparable! Human nature is indistinguishably blent with the divine influence. A man is properly himself *plus* God. If he gets wrong it is because he is walking on one leg.

"A man really knows nobody but himself. If one could only be somebody else for ten minutes, what a revelation! Yes, I know myself far better than any one else knows me. [Does

Digitized by Google

not, it was asked, the one who loves another see in him better traits than he recognizes in himself?] Another may judge better as to the *degree* of attainment, but my aim, my purpose, my direction, I know better than any one else. And degree is not of great account. It takes long to ripen us. We must be patient — with others, and with ourselves. That impresses me in Christ — his patience. I know actual humanity best in myself, ideal humanity in him.

"The great thing for a man is to be headed right. Do I see as matter of fact that most people are headed definitely either right or wrong? I think so. Most men will recognize, either, if I keep on this way long enough I shall come to grief, — or, if I go on as I am, it tends toward good, — only they lose faith in the reality and amount of the good. Death may bring simply a fuller consciousness that the good we move toward is real and great. It may thus simply confirm and intensify our perceptions here: 'Yes, the seed *is* stronger than the six inches of soil above it, we finding ourselves the same, yet how different, — just as we do in earthly changes to another country, or I suppose to marriage, or into bereavement. The bereaved person's first feeling is, 'Everything is differ-

Digitized by Google

ent,' — then, 'How little change,' with a sort of self-reproach, — and at last slowly that the change is vast indeed.

"A disadvantage in a minister's life that his emotions are his stock in trade? Why, that's the beauty of it! His heart goes into every stroke of his work. Not like a man who spends his days in meeting such requests as 'I want a 6½ shoe.' The expression of emotion does not lessen it, — any more than you can subtract from fire, — it spreads and increases. Danger that when the preacher has expressed his feeling he will fancy he has done enough? I should say that was the test between true and false emotion — whether it works into character.

"Some one who had met Mr. Beecher told me: 'What struck me was that he was the only man I ever knew who could express great sentiments in conversation without their sounding ridiculous.' I myself have met one man who could do this, Keshub Chunder Sen, whom I saw in his own house in India, and whose thought, word and gesture all had the touch of greatness.

"The reserve common to most of us is an Anglo-Saxon trait. The German has a simple-hearted confidence that his neighbor will re-

Digitized by Google

ceive his sentiment kindly, — and the Frenchman is too well satisfied with himself to care whether he is understood.

"Yet I don't specially regret our own reserve, — one gets the deeper things from his friends, and for the rest it is well to have light and shade.

"Yes, I like dogs, but I don't know them very well. They can't be kept in town, and that is a penalty of living in a city, — though I am a real cockney in my tastes. I have to be content with my fellow-men!"

The man's face is wonderfully *good*, — a sweet mouth, — eyebrows which contract now and then in thought. Perfect simplicity, modesty, and heartiness, in the whole man.

Digitized by Google

THE ORIENTAL CHRIST[1]

[OCTOBER, 1883.] This book is the image, projected upon the printed page, of a pure, tender, holy life. It is more than thought: it is spirit. As we read, we are in personal communion with an inspired soul. The intellect may make its analysis and comment, but the first and last word is this: the book brings us into a friendship, dewy and fragrant as the flowers of morning, strong to uplift, to console, to bring the heart near to God.

In its form, the volume is a series of brooding meditations upon the Perfect One. The titles of the chapters are in an unvarying form: "The Bathing Christ," "The Fasting Christ," "The Praying Christ," and so on to "The Parting Christ," "The Dying Christ," and "The Reigning Christ." Self-renunciation is not merely a theme of the book, but a part of its substance. Of egotism there is nothing. The author, in the introduction, tells briefly and simply the story of the spiritual crisis of his

[1] *The Oriental Christ.* By P. C. Mozoomdar. Boston: George H. Ellis. 1883.

Digitized by Google

own life as giving the keynote to his faith, and as his personal testimony. It is a beautiful and moving story. Thenceforward there is no word about himself. The gaze is wholly fixed on the ideal and perfect man, and on the vision of God beheld in that man "as in a glass." But, as a strip of living green in the desert tells the traveler of an unseen brook, so these chapters speak mutely in every line of a life out of which they have grown, — a life of struggle and conquest, of hallowed suffering and joy.

The Christian believer, welcoming this view of his Lord as dear and familiar, and essentially new to him only in its vividness and depth and amplitude, may well wonder at its genesis. The author, Mozoomdar, by no means calls himself a Christian. He stands in well-defined dissent from Christianity as he has seen it in his own land under its English and American forms. Its dogma and ritual are unattractive to him. He holds in common with it that, and that only, which is inmost and central to it, — the gospel histories and the person of Christ. With Christ as an historical personage, he claims some special affinities and sympathies, because like him an Oriental. Or, rather, it is not for himself, but for his people that he makes this claim.

Digitized by Google

He speaks not as alone, but as one of a growing and aggressive body, whose leader, Keshub Chunder Sen, he acknowledges with reverent and grateful affection as his own guide and leader. He speaks of the Brahmo Somaj with an accent as fond and proud and hopeful as that with which his American fellow disciples speak of the Church. His claim to open the mind and heart of Christ more fully than it has been done by the European mind is made modestly, but fearlessly. And — while it is to be said that he scarcely seems to appreciate that best thought of Christ which has never been wholly lost by the Church and is now appearing in new brightness — yet it would not be strange if Christian thinkers owned that a sweeter, more winning picture of their Lord has never been drawn than by the hand of this Hindu.

The conditions under which this new birth of Christ's religion occurs strikingly recall, in some respects, the conditions of eighteen centuries ago. It is not only that the Hindus are Oriental as the Jews were. They are also, like the Jews, in subjection to a masterful European nation. It is a subjection which maintains social order, but denies political liberty. The finest energies of the people so dominated, denied outlet

Digitized by Google

in the material conquests which engage the mastering race, find issue now as then in the nobler realm within the heart of man. Some of the lines of that wonderful poem in which Matthew Arnold condenses the history of Christendom — "Obermann Once More" — apply with equal justice to the birth of the Brahmo Somaj: —

The brooding East with awe beheld
  Her impious younger world.
The Roman tempest swelled and swelled,
  And on her head was hurled.

The East bowed low before the blast,
  In patient, deep disdain:
She let the legions thunder past,
  And plunged in thought again.

So well she mused, a morning broke
  Across her spirit gray,
A conquering, new-born joy awoke,
  And filled her soul with day.

"Poor world," she cried, "so deep accurst,
  That runn'st from pole to pole
To seek a draft to slake thy thirst,
  Go, seek it in thy soul!"

The predominant note of the book, and that which most markedly gives its Oriental character, is its pure idealism. Its temper is that

Digitized by Google

supreme absorption in spiritual experiences to which the whole external world has meaning chiefly as a symbol, or as something to be escaped from and risen above. It is a lofty mysticism. From the greatest dangers of mysticism it is free. It is free from solitariness and self-worship, for its temper is intensely sympathetic. It has none of the frigidity of a speculative mysticism, the heart-chill which besets the "mind forever voyaging through strange seas of thought alone"; for its supreme quest is not knowledge, but holiness. There is in it that exquisite humility which belongs to the best, because he sees so clearly the heights he has not reached. There is something of the pensive, of the inevitable loneliness of the man who lives above his fellows, the awed and questioning hush in which the soul sometimes looks upon the mysteries of the universe, the burden which the world's suffering lays on the sympathetic heart. But the prevailing tone is one of deepest harmony with God and his universe. There is the indescribable atmosphere of peace. There is that glad and fearless calm for which goes out the longing desire of every troubled heart and mind. There are, in clear expression and in contagious power, the influences which waft

Digitized by Google

the seeker into that calm, — the struggle, the renunciation, the trust.

For how much does this book stand, as a sign and factor in the world's affairs? Its highest significance, apparently, must relate to the country which produced it. It speaks of a religious movement notable in its purity and enthusiasm, and of which the success and extent are not yet to be measured. Of its relation to the thought and life of America we may speak more confidently. It comes with peculiar appeal to the best element in each of our various schools, and to each with something of rebuke, which is the more effective because unspoken. Its influence will be felt as one of the dissolvents of the old dogmatic system. The binding force of that system is one too little appreciated by those who stand outside of it. The tenacity of the old dogma among intelligent men lies in this: in the creeds and churches as they exist to-day there is an active ministering of faith and hope and love. They who feel something supplied to them by that ministering — however meagerly and imperfectly, accompanied with however much of growing doubt as to the reasonableness of the intellectual system — see as yet small prospect or as-

Digitized by Google

surance that they can find outside of the old forms that spiritual nourishment which is to them a deeper necessity than is a rational creed. Within the old creed a great many souls can yet keep themselves warm. They will not leave it until they see that the sunshine outside is warmer. This book shows a life glowing and luminous with the light of heaven. It is an unconscious and winning invitation to come out from the immurement of dogma and ceremonial, and look upon the open face of God.

What message, on the other hand, does this book bring to those religious thinkers who have diverged so far from Christianity as to renounce not only its dogmatic system, but also the unique nature and supreme authority of Jesus? Its significance to them is less intellectual than dynamic. It will not necessitate for them a change in their belief as to the early literature and origin of Christianity, the person of Christ, or the order of the universe. But it revives for them the dependence of man, for the highest truth and vital inspiration, upon his moral and spiritual attitude, and not upon his reason alone. It emphasizes those qualities of character whose importance incomparably

Digitized by Google

transcends all our opinions about history and philosophy, — the qualities of aspiration, humility, sympathy, and trust.

So far as it involves an intellectual theory of the world, this book may fairly be called defective in its excess of Orientalism. The defect, broadly stated, is the characteristic one of the mystic, — an undervaluing of the significance and importance of the external world. It is a defect which, on the side of character, inclines to asceticism; in respect to culture is too indifferent to history and science; in the ordering of society is too little regardful of the economic and industrial virtues. The revelation of God to man is twofold, through his own soul and through the external world. The sages and saints of the East have always been prone, in the rapt passion of the inward vision, to ignore too much the processes and laws of the material world. The Western mind is just now studying those processes and laws in a sudden successful ardor, which for the time half-deafens it to the still, small voice within. It needs profoundly just such a word of recall as this book brings from the brooding, tender soul of the East. But we need not tear up our science and criticism and history, because they

Digitized by Google

do not of themselves constitute the sufficient food of man.

In *The Oriental Christ* there is a slight but perceptible favor shown to asceticism. There is the idea that the body may be subdued by defying and ignoring it, as in severe fasting. But the West has learned that "Nature is governed by obeying her"; — that, in order to be temperate and chaste, it is not enough to passionately aspire and to deny the body its gratifications: the laws of that body must be understood and obeyed, and the physical regimen must go hand in hand with moral purpose. In this book there is recommended a devotion to the higher life and a trust in Providence which really takes no care for the daily bread. The sentiment of the Gospels is faithfully reproduced in this. But, in reality, the man who does take thought for the morrow, and keeps himself a penny ahead, does well not only for himself but for the world. Thrift is as truly a virtue as trust. Our Hindu teacher exalts the feminine qualities as those which save a people, — mildness, submission, reverent acceptance of whatever comes. But history shows that the sterner masculine traits — the courage which resists the tyrant as well as the courage

Digitized by Google

which submits, the aggressive energy, the curiosity which pries, and the vigor which subdues — have their great part in building up a nation. The sweet-natured Hindu shrinks from the rough force of his English masters; but just as Rome reduced a warring world to peace, and gave Christianity its chance, so it is the strong hand of England that, in subduing India, has also pacified it, and made a fair field for the Brahmo Somaj.

Pure idealism is too indifferent to the objective truth which science and history establish. This book reproduces the life of Christ as an exquisite poem. It ignores the difficulties which, as a narrative of facts, that history presents. It gets lightly over the miracles. At the supreme moment of the bodily resurrection, it refuses to press inquiry, and asks, Why rudely raise the veil from the simple, sacred trust which consoled those deeply wounded hearts? Let not those minds be thought irreverently bold which cannot be satisfied with such evasions. Let it not be thought that the soberest, severest reading of the plain facts of history and the laws of the world is inconsistent with the deepest trust and the holiest character.

Our theologic controversies, our hot asser-

Digitized by Google

tions, our barren denials, may well hush themselves in silence, as we listen to such words as these in the chapter on "The Trusting Christ":

"Despair is born of hardness of heart. The hopefulness of Christ's faith penetrated the very veil of death. . . . Suffering loses its smart before genuine trust. Trust proves its strength in suffering. Every one suffers, but the trusting Son of God understands and honors suffering. The perfection of faith is at the moment of death. True trust is struck by suffering as the great tree of the forest by the storm, to be tossed, torn, and settled deeper in everlasting strength. Suffering and trust ever go together: the suffering is for a little while, while the trust is transformed into eternal joy. . . . Trust, as a faculty of the soul, passes almost without recognition. Yet, in spiritual life, it is a cardinal, vital power. It is not a mere feeling. Though its relations to all warmth of sentiment be very deep, it is a positive organ of strength. The solidity, the objective magnitude, of truth is never realized except through trust. . . . It is strange that men will put their trust in fallible historical records of the past, in legendary imaginative revelations, but have no faith in the tremendous realities that

Digitized by Google

beset them. Christ saw things through trust: we see things through the intellect. . . . How few men can retain the sweetness and fullness of their trust amid the small, vulgar harassments of life; and how fewer still amid great and unprecedented disasters! . . . In the wreck of bodily powers, in the dissolution of social attachments, it is true trust that finds out the difference between what is transient and what is permanent."

Here is a passage in a different key from "The Feasting Christ": —

"Christ was the child of Nature. His spirit had the poetic, pastoral genius of the primitive Hebrew. He spent his nights with the silent stars on the mountain-tops. He preached on the shingly margin of the Galilean lake, he spoke from the blue ripples of its breezy surface. Nature was his bridal chamber, and Christ was the bridegroom. He worshiped, he meditated, he found his occupation and his simple joy, walked, stood, or sat amid the bounties and solitudes of Nature. There is for every one a festive converse with the silent eloquence of this mysterious universe. There is a joyous suggestion in sky and air. For the exiled and outcast, there is a benediction in the

Digitized by Google

calmness of morning and evening twilight. Every landscape over plain and mountain is an everlasting possession to the eye purged from covetousness. Every song of bird, breeze, or man is a feast to the Son of God: all wealth of pure laughter and innocent merriment is undoubtedly his. He is happy with the rich, happy with the poor, happy with the child. Christ is joyous as the bridegroom."

These quotations are taken almost at random out of a score marked for use. Description of a book like this is much like a botanical definition of a rose. To know the rose, one must see it and inhale its breath. Fair and perfect and fragrant as a rose blooming amid the autumnal chills, comes upon our chilly questionings and speculative debates this word out of a deep heart, this ray from the Light of the world. It comes to the divided and jarring peoples, an omen of reconcilement and peace; to many a hungry heart, the bread and water of life.[1]

[1] At a later time I had the good fortune to see and hear Mozoomdar, when he was visiting America. His personality was impressive. In his face were dignity, power, and calm. When he addressed an audience, his deep and sonorous voice flowed in a kind of musical rhythm. In the last period of his life he withdrew from the world into a religious retirement. He has passed away, but the Brahmo Somaj lives and flourishes.

Digitized by Google

THE DAWNING RELIGION

In the lucid and suggestive letters of Professor Goldwin Smith to the New York *Sun* the question recurs: In the inevitable waning of respect for miracle, authority, and dogma, what is to meet the need of mankind for a religion to work and live by? In answer let me suggest the elements of religious beliefs and practice which seem to be entering into a new crystallization. Those elements may be grouped as, first, the living residuum inherited from the old creed; and secondly, the distinctly modern additions.

In writing of "The Dawning Religion," let me disclaim the wild expectation of any universal agreement among men. There will doubtless continue to be in a sense as many religions as there are races or nationalities or classes of minds; in some sense there will be as many religions as there are men. But we may not unreasonably estimate what are likely to be in the next generation the central currents in the religious thinking and living of the main body of intelligent people.

Digitized by Google

The doctrines of the Christian Church, however composite in their origin, are in one aspect the expression — somewhat crude; if you please, somewhat outgrown — of experiences in human lives which have a lasting and vital significance. Let us try to distinguish the kernel from the shell. Take the first article of Christianity, the Fatherhood of God. As expressing a distinctly personal ruler of the universe — a deity with human lineaments raised to transcendent perfection — it hardly appeals to the man of to-day as it did to his fathers. But look at its inner meaning. The filial relation — what is it but a blending of obedience and trust? And is not that the disposition which the man of to-day recognizes as his true attitude toward the universe? Obedience, moral fidelity, allegiance to the best we know — that is seen to be the first and supreme law, and the natural accompaniment of such obedience is a tranquil assurance that all is well. Moral fidelity brings peace — it is a fact of widest observation and verifiable at will. As the obedient child feels its mother's responsive love and care, so the man who is steadily faithful to the best he knows finds himself guided, calmed, upheld. Thus is reaffirmed the essential idea which was

Digitized by Google

pictorially expressed by saying that man is the child of God.

It was always the aim of real Christianity, it is the aim of all true religion, to create and foster the holy life. And in the holy life is realized the presence of the Divine Power. We shall always of necessity use pictorial symbols for the spiritual realities, but with deepening consciousness that the reality transcends the symbol.

So again the deification of Christ has as its inner meaning that it offers a sublime and inspiring ideal of the holy life. Give up the miracle story, from the birth to the resurrection; make little or much account of the historical Jesus — and you have still, in the character represented to the world's imagination and heart by the name of Christ, an embodiment of moral nobility, of tenderness and trust, of spiritual victory.

Perhaps all the great doctrines of the Church have some such vital core. Prayer is the upward look of the soul. Conversion is just the conscious setting of the will in a supreme purpose of following the light. Forgiveness is the realization, oftenest by the help of some human hand and heart, that the worst evil may be

Digitized by Google

sloughed off and left behind. The communion of saints is felt in a degree wherever comrades in a good cause come together. The sacraments — some "outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace" — they are more various, more universal, than the two of the Protestant or the seven of the Catholic Church.

Pass now from the residuum, or the sublimation, of the old creed to the distinctly modern ideas. Greatest of these is the recognition that Nature is a divine revelation and a divine law. We are not to supersede or defy Nature, but to study and conform to her. This gives to obedience, which was set and is still set as the supreme requirement, a new and fuller meaning. We are to cultivate ourselves and our children as observantly as we cultivate plants. Instead of praying for supernatural conversion we are to train habits. We are to guard bodily health as one side of spiritual health. For individual development and for social administration we are to seek guidance from recorded experience and from constant observation as well as from ideals. Two high priests, one of Nature and one of Man, have spoken harmonious oracles. Said

Digitized by Google

Bacon: "Nature is governed by obeying her." Said Emerson: "By contenting himself with obedience man becomes divine."

The last century has discovered evolution. That amazing process affects the mind with singular awe. As observed it does not favor an easy optimism. The seeming sacrifice of the individual to the type, the fallen lying always beside the victors, hushes and humbles the beholder. Yet the impression is strong of some vast plan, some harmony whose secret we can but dimly guess. The interpretation seems best hinted by the latest product of the process — man himself at his highest and best. Along this line we forecast a yet nobler flowering of the ages, "the Christ that is to be." And for practical guidance we have found in evolution an incomparable clew. We are learning to look in our social endeavors to growth and not to violence, and to get in line with the forces that are steadily pushing upward.

"Social endeavors," — that expresses a field which opens before us with a clearness and a call almost unknown to our fathers. The oneness of mankind, the solidarity of rich and poor, the humanity inclusive of all races — these are felt and asserted with militant energy against

Digitized by Google

all assailing forces. Good citizenship, social betterment, charity not as alms but as aid to self-help, human comradeship — these are among the watchwords of modern virtue.

Within scarcely more than a century something like a new spiritual sense seems to have been developed in the finer class of minds. It is the impression through the outward aspect of the earth not only of beauty, not only of sublimity, but of something mystic and sacred. It is as if through earth's face a divine soul looked upon man, claiming him as its own. It is like the heart's inmost secret translated into forms of outward beauty. Whatever traces of this sentiment may be found in earlier literature, it is voiced by Wordsworth with a freshness and power which marks a new era. Now a hundred poets give it voice and countless dumb poets feel it.

Far back through the ages run the roots of that union of man and woman in love and marriage which at its best we recognize to-day as the fairest flower that blooms on earth. Jew nor Greek knew it as we know it. Christianity, Catholicism, chivalry, Protestantism, poetry — yes, and mystic powers we cannot name or discern — nurtured the wonderful

Digitized by Google

plant. To us wedded love stands for everyday blessedness, for the source and type of highest social advance, and as the greatest of those natural sacraments which bring man to conscious nearness to God.

There is a sentiment, delicate and profound, so sacred that it lives for the most part in silence, yet finds utterance sometimes through a poet. It is the inspiration of Dante; it is the theme of *In Memoriam;* it is part of the message which makes Browning dear; it has been whispered by many a seer and saint. It is that the beloved dead may be realized as living and sometimes in closest communion with us — a reality too profound for word or thought, but an incomparable source of energy and peace, of hope and joy. By this, as an emerging fact of human experience, we may interpret that resurrection story to which Christianity so fondly clings; we may divest the story of its miracle and legend, and believe that not once alone but always and everywhere it is from love and sorrow that the immortal hope and the undying love emerge.

Other phases of mankind's new spiritual development crowd upon the pen. There is the effort to conceive and realize daily toil not as

Digitized by Google

slavery or drudgery, but as education, as character-building force, as social service. There is that sympathy with all sentient life which takes even the brute creation into fellowship.

Our outlook upon the world is by right incomparably more cheerful than that of our fathers. We have learned that growth is a law of the universe. The Divine Energy is recognized as working in and through ourselves. "With the great girdle of God go and encompass the earth!" We see that evil, however perplexing to the intellect, is a perpetual challenge to the will. The combat exacts a heavy price, but offers great prizes — fortitude, sympathy, tenderness, spiritual victory. In a world so friendly as ours we are not afraid to laugh. We accept humor as an essential trait of manhood. When the hero's battle cry has led to triumph we are glad that he should lie at ease and his lungs should crow like chanticleer's.

These elements, old and new, of the religion visibly dawning among men — is it strange that in their wealth and variety they have not been compressed and formulated into neat little verbal symbols? And shall we be impatient that the instrumentalities for their practical

Digitized by Google

expression take time in the evolving — when even in busiest New York and under the shadow of the Vatican we can see the new life moulding its organs? Already, chaotic as the times may seem, the loyal will and aspiring soul can find ample soil and genial climate. Already, though across decades or centuries, we can see the universal religion into which the older creeds dissolve — "as morning drinks the morning star."

Digitized by Google

THE MEANING OF *DAVID GRIEVE*[1]

[1892.] *The History of David Grieve* is a noble expression of the new religion which is dawning among men. I know hardly any other work of imaginative literature which in this respect equals it, — equals it, I mean, in the truth and justice with which the whole religious problem is faced, and the strength and inspiration of the answer found.

Simply as an intellectual production, it is a great work. The characters are living, the scenery is vivid, the action is strong, the style is admirable. The reader's interest is closely held by every sentence. His eagerness to follow the story is only checked by the deeper fascination of thoughts whose suggestiveness compels him to pause. It is the action of the story or the development of the characters that suggests the brooding thought, for the story-teller never stops to moralize by the way. That artistic fault of interjected preaching or reflection, which runs to such excess in George Eliot's

[1] *The History of David Grieve.* By Mrs. Humphry Ward. New York : Macmillan & Co.

Digitized by Google

later books, is avoided by Mrs. Ward, who in this as in other respects is a thorough artist.

One quality indeed detracts from the mere pleasure of the reader. The story is, on the whole, a somber one. Disasters come thickly, and some of them are irremediable. The conclusion is very far from the conventional, "And so they were married, and lived happily ever afterward." Our last glimpse of the hero — the brave, great-hearted, lovable David — is as he sits alone on Christmas night in his bereaved home. The strenuousness of the story is almost unlighted by humor, and yet the final impression the book leaves, on some readers at least, is anything but depressing. Rather, one turns back from the reading to real life with fresh courage and faith and hope.

The central fact depicted in *Robert Elsmere* was the distressing break of a religious nature with the beliefs which had embodied its religion. The presentation of this was powerful. But the attempt at a reconstruction of religion was in that book weak and faltering. There was a hint at a sort of Christianity, with human brotherhood as the only confident affirmation, with God very dim, and immortality almost despaired of.

Digitized by Google

David Grieve does not portray any such sharp conflict between the old and the new as *Robert Elsmere*. The present book is away from the whole region of dogma. It has that aversion, or rather that sense of incapacity, for mapping the infinite, which is characteristic of the modern religious attitude. What it mainly depicts is, in a word, the education of a soul by the realities of life itself. It is not here a question of the inspiration of the Scriptures or of any doctrinal system. It is the experience of a boy and man as he struggles upward, and as he is met on his way by Hardship, Ambition, Affection, Toil, Knowledge, Nature, Art, Beauty, Love, Grief, Marriage, Fatherhood, Bereavement, Service. And we see that all these are angels, with faces open or veiled, helping the man toward God.

But interwoven with this is a companion picture. The boy has a sister, and she makes no upward struggle. Her nature is willful, self-indulgent, perverse. These traits come to her by direct inheritance from the mother, while in the brother is traceable the father's fine nature. She takes the downward road, and ends miserably. At one critical point, it is her brother's remissness — the brief exception to life-long fidelity to her — that lets her make a fatal

Digitized by Google

slip. How can such things be in a divine universe? No answer is attempted. It is here that the real tragedy of the book lies. David's troubles serve him as an education: even from his fall he "rises to higher things on his dead self as a stepping-stone." But there is no such outcome to poor Louie's misery. The book which includes such an element paints no rose-colored picture. And for that very reason it is the truer and greater book. In this world, so far as we know it, some souls do go wrong. It is the old, awful, inscrutable fact, which Calvinism squarely faced and gave the stern answer, "God so wills it!" We, indeed, divest the fact of the gratuitous and to us unsupportable horror of an eternity of misery to follow. For that lurid vista we substitute a hope, — a reverent but tremulous hope. But before the fact which still remains, that the only seen issue of many lives is failure, we can only bow our heads in silence.

> From the same cradle's side,
> From the same mother's knee,
> One to long darkness and the frozen tide,
> One to the Peaceful Sea.[1]

But our profit lies in the study of success rather than the contemplation of failure. And

[1] Oliver Wendell Holmes.

Digitized by Google

the growth of David through his successive stages is told with exquisite naturalness. It is not an argument nor a sermon: we have here a *man*, — a most natural and lovable man, a man we retain in our memories as a friend. After a childhood whose hardships are such as to brace, but not to crush, the sturdy boy, he comes under the temporary effect of fervent evangelical religion. Later, as he works his way up in the world, a healthy ambition and relish for toil blending with a keen love of knowledge, he comes under the influence of Voltairean writers. He gets friendship and help in sore trouble from an old Unitarian minister, — a very human and touching figure, this Mr. Ancrum. He is intimate with a High Churchwoman of the best type. In Paris he comes face to face with the desire of the eye and the desire of the flesh and the pride of life, with glimpses, too, of the nobler soul of France. He is entangled not by his senses, but by his imagination; and a brief intoxication of passion is followed by a bitter waking. On the brink of despair, a friend's hand snatches him back; and he gropes to solid ground again by his daily work and the felt claims of other lives. Becoming a capitalist, he is drawn into profit-sharing enter-

Digitized by Google

prises and wide designs for practical brotherhood. He marries an inferior woman who loves him, and gently stoops to her level. Her death brings through sorrow the crowning gleam of revelation, and he turns firmly to his life's work.

In David's connection with Elise, that old fundamental law of humanity, that nothing justifies the union of man and woman but a devotion in lifelong fidelity and service, of which marriage is the formal bond, comes out with fresh power. Mrs. Ward has done well to set forth that law by so truthful and fearless a picture of what the transgression and the penalty mean. This is the point of greatest peril in all revolutions of belief and upsettings of conventional standards, — the relation of man and woman. The question between supernaturalism and naturalism is hardly more than an academic disputation compared to that question of marriage. It is well to see just what is liable to come of the wrong answer. "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof is the way of death!" One of the finest strokes in the book is the homely little story told by the French working-woman to David of what marriage has been to her and

Digitized by Google

her husband. At such points it seems to be not Art, but Nature herself, that is speaking to us.

In only one place, to my thinking, does the story seriously violate probability, and that is in the ease and moderate felicity with which David adapts himself to the woman he marries, — an idealist, a poet, a hero, mated with a shallow, commonplace, small-souled woman, whose only attraction is that she loves him to the extent of her little capacity. The veil which is judiciously thrown over the early years of their marriage would be apt in real life to cover a slow and grinding torment to David, which might leave him stronger for bearing it, but hardly the complacent husband he is shown to us. And yet one is inclined to be grateful to Mrs. Ward for essaying to show that even a very imperfect marriage may prove a blessing and an education. The power of the perfect and ideal marriage to ennoble life has been often shown — thank God! — in reality and in literature. But rarely before this in literature, though not rarely in real life, has the mating of very unequal natures worked out a blessing through patience and loyalty. For that possibility, too, God be thanked!

Digitized by Google

The book is rich in strongly drawn characters besides the central ones. Its principal scene is in Manchester; and, away from the church dignitaries, the London society, the university rooms, with which English books have made us so familiar, it strongly suggests that other society of working men and women, in which lies so much of the future of England. It is not merely a creed that is changing: it is a society that is remaking.

The moral of the book is not tacked to it, with a *Hæc fabula docet:* it breathes in the whole story. Three extracts will sufficiently show its tone and quality.

"He did not allow himself to sink for long into the languor of memory and grief. He knew the perils of his own nature, and there was in him a stern sense of the difficulty of living aright, and the awfulness of the claim made by God and man on the strength and will of the individual. It seemed to him that he had been taught of God through natural affections, through sorrow, through the constant energies of the intellect. Never had the Divine Voice been clearer to him, or the Divine Fatherhood more real. Freely he had received, but only that he might freely give. On this Christmas

Digitized by Google

night he renewed every past vow of the soul, and in so doing rose once more into that state and temper which is man's pledge of immortality, since already, here and now, it is the eternal life begun."

Earlier, beside his wife's death-bed: —

"His whole life and hers passed before him; and in his mind there hovered perpetually the image of the potter and the wheel. He and she, — the Hand so unfaltering, so divine, had bound them there, through resistance and anguish unspeakable. And now for him there was only a sense of absolute surrender and submission, which, in this hour of agony and exaltation, rose steadily into the ecstasy — ay, the *vision* — of faith! In the pitying love which had absorbed his being, he had known that 'best' at last whereat his craving youth had grasped, and, losing himself wholly, had found his God. And for her, had not her weak life become one flame of love, — a cup of the Holy Grail, beating and pulsating with the Divine Life?"

A few months later, when this experience has fused with the other element of his thought and feeling, David writes in his journal: —

"In the old days I was constantly troubled —

Digitized by Google

and not for myself only, but for others, the poor and unlearned, especially, who, as it seemed to me, would lose most in the crumbling of the Christian mythology — as to the intellectual difficulties of the approach to God. All this philosophical travail of two thousand years, and so many doubts and darkness! A world athirst for preaching, and nothing simple or clear to preach, when once the miracle-child of Bethlehem had been dispossessed. And *now* it is daylight plain to me that in the simplest act of loving self-surrender there is the germ of all faith, the essence of all lasting religion. Quicken human service, purify and strengthen human love, and have no fear but that the conscience will find its God. For all the time this quickening and this purification are his work in thee. Around thee are the institutions, the ideals, the knowledge and beliefs, ethical or intellectual, in which that work, that life, have been so far fragmentarily and partially realized. Submit thyself, and press forward. Thou knowest well what it means to be *better*, — more pure, more loving, more self-denying. And, in thy struggle to be all these, God cometh to thee and abides. . . . *But the greatest of these is love!*"

Digitized by Google

As landmarks of the age, these two books of Mrs. Ward may be said to come next in succession to *Middlemarch* and *Daniel Deronda*. In those the old faith has passed away, and the new is but dimly seen; or, rather, they hardly contain a faith. Duty remains, austere and sad. Brotherhood there is, — strenuous, pitiful, half-crushed with sense of the world's woe. Thought there is, — active, prolific, yet with a certain barrenness of high results. God is scarcely seen except as Destiny, and the Hereafter is only a blank. The gloom which envelops these books is easily traced to its sources; but they display no open conflict with the accepted forms of religion. But in *Robert Elsmere* we have the question of supernaturalism frankly faced, and a negative answer given. The last impression of that book is tragic, as of a shattered faith. Yet we recognize in it a kind of brave onward march, — Egypt left behind, with its flesh-pots, its too familiar deities, its too easy immortality, — the wilderness faced, and the stern voice of Sinai reverently heard. And now, in this later book of Mrs. Ward's, the traveler stands on the Mount of Vision. His hand still grasps the sword. But the sunlight is clear about him, and the Promised Land lies before

Digitized by Google

him. Religion again becomes as the heart of a little child. "Thou knowest well what it is to be *better*." "The simplest act of loving self-surrender." It is resolute as the strong man armed, — "a stern sense of the difficulty of living aright, and the awfulness of the claim made by God and man on the strength and will of the individual." The narrow path before the feet leads straight to the celestial and eternal beauty, "That state and temper which is man's pledge of immortality, since already, here and now, it is the eternal life begun."

So as from the Delectable Mountains the soldier-pilgrim surveys the way before him. To-morrow, welcome to the march and the battle!

Digitized by Google

A GOSPEL OF WINTER

SHORT days, long nights, earth stripped of her green robe, spells of bitter cold, vegetable life suspended, animal life forced to fight for itself, — what can the winter season yield to man's comfort and gladness? It has made him strong and resourceful. The northern lands have developed a sturdy manhood which the tropics know not. The house built as a fort against the cold has become a temple of the family. The fireside has grown to be the symbol of cheery and intimate companionship. Facing the north wind we draw in vigor, courage, exhilaration. And winter is beautiful. Of Mother Nature's three gowns, the white is as handsome as the green or the brown. Splendor for the eye, hardihood of body, valor of soul, warmth of home-love — these are the gifts of winter.

There come seasons of spiritual winter to humanity, — at least to individuals and classes — when with the dying of old creeds their luxurious growths of sentiment and imagination, rich forms, props of consolation, fall away or become empty. How fares it then with the

Digitized by Google

soul? Let us listen to one man who has faced this inward winter as intrepidly as Peary breasted the Arctic ice fields, and learn what he has found. He is a man who has long been severed not only from all traditional churches, but from the whole structure of supernatural belief. He has relied on no voice from heaven, as vouched for by church or recorded in book. He has faced the facts of human experience, with the earnest desire not only to find for himself a noble and satisfying life, but to lead others to such a life. He has worked for this end many years. And he has worked in a field of special difficulties, — in New York, a place materialistic enough to break the heart of any idealist unless he be of toughest fiber. Wintry conditions, indeed!

The man I mean is Felix Adler. Of what he has done in a quarter-century, one part, the external part, would be recorded in a long chronicle of weekly lectures to great audiences; of a system of kindergartens and schools aiming at systematic physical and spiritual culture; of active part in tenement-house reform and all good public causes in the metropolis; of the extension of his special scheme — the Society for Ethical Culture — into other cities and

Digitized by Google

countries. But we are concerned here with his spiritual message, especially as it is conveyed in a little book of selections from his writings, compiled by one of his people, entitled, *Life and Destiny* (McClure, Phillips & Co., 1903).

The first distinctive mark is that its appeal speaks to the consciousness of any thoughtful person, and rests on no authority which may be doubted, no argument or assumption which may be disbelieved. It speaks home to the moral consciousness in as simple and self-evidencing a fashion as one who says, "Look at this tree, this rock, that river." It wastes no force in denial of other men's creeds. The devout Protestant or Catholic reading it, though he may insist "but there is something more," can but say "yet this is good." And the mind to which Catholic or Protestant dogma has become impossible finds here some one who deals as a master with the dearest concerns of life.

This is the foundation, the keynote: "We are here — no matter who put us here, or how we came here — to fulfill a task. We cannot afford to go of our own volition until the last item of our duty is discharged. We are here to make mind master of matter, soul of sense. We

Digitized by Google

do so by overriding pain, not by weakly capitulating to it." "The question, Is life worth living? implies a species of blasphemy. The right question to ask is: Am I worthy of living? If I am not, I can make myself so. That is always in my power."

That for our own part. And what of the power behind and above us? "The divine in man is our sole ground for believing that there is anything divine in the universe outside of man. Man is the revealer of the divine." And what meaning then do we give to this external world about us? "This fair earth, with its fir-clad hills, its snowy mountains, its sparkling seas, its azure vaults, and the holy light of the stars, is but a painted screen behind which lurks the true reality." To that reality our closest access is through humanity. "What do we know of deity? Just what we know of the sun before it has yet risen above the summit of the mountain. We see its glories painted in crimson and in gold upon the clouds that are above our horizon; we know it by its reflected light. So all we know of the divine is the light of it that shines reflected from human souls." "Of the origin of things we know nothing and can know nothing. Perfection does not reveal

Digitized by Google

itself to us as existing in the beginning; but as something that ought to be, something new which we are to help create. Somehow the secret of the universe is hidden in our breast. Somehow the destinies of the universe depend upon our exertion." Thoughts, these last, which sink deep in the heart, and animate to all noblest effort.

What then is the work set us, in its broadest conception? "There is a city to be built, the plan of which we carry in our heads, in our hearts. Countless generations have already toiled at the building of it. The effort to aid in completing it, with us, takes the place of prayer. In this sense we say, *Laborare est orare.*"

But to aim clearly at the best estate for mankind, we must know what is the best estate for the individual. What then is the essential nature of that highest life which we name religion? "It is a mistake to approach the subject of religion from the point of view of philosophy. All really religious persons declare that religion is primarily a matter of experience." "The undulatory theory would not help any one to know what light is who had never seen light, and the chemical formula for water would not

Digitized by Google

help any one to know what water is who had never tasted it. To know light, we must see it; to know water, we must taste it." "The experience of religion . . . is accessible to every one who chooses to have it. . . . It is essentially a moral experience. It may be described as a sense of subjection to imperious impulses which urge our finite nature toward infinite issues; a sense of propulsions which we can resist, but not disown; a sense of a power greater than ourselves, with which, nevertheless, in essence we are one; a sense, in times of moral stress, of channels opened by persistent effort, which let in a flood of rejuvenating energy and put us in command of unsuspected moral resources; a sense, finally, of the complicity of our life with the life of others, of living in them in no merely metaphysical signification of the word; of unity with all spiritual being whatsoever."

Here, in language somewhat abstract and philosophical, is an expression of truths which any honest and earnest man may verify for himself. They are truths which may be read as wide as the history of mankind. They are the realities which Christianity has expressed under the terms of repentance, obedience,

Digitized by Google

prayer, redemption, communion. They are facts that can be as directly verified, as surely known, as fruitfully applied, as the facts of chemistry and physics.

Let us come to the close and homely application. "Day by day there are triumphs to be won over the passions that stir in our breasts; over the rising anger that sears our lips; over the turpitudes that defile our hearts; over the spirit of impatience and mutiny that threatens the authority of our reason. By such triumphs we are raised above our baser selves, and the fire which consumes our grosser natures, like the flaming chariot of Elijah, bears us living into a higher world. To those who take part with all their heart and all their might in the struggle there comes, at last, a great peace, a purified gladness."

The final test of a religion or way of life comes in the presence of trouble. In the words of William Gannett: "How do we meet our difficulties? That is the first question, to which there is no second." This which we have called a gospel of winter faces the worst evils, as men count them, with a courage beyond the soldier's or the explorer's. "Poverty, sickness, sorrow, and the experience of sin are the great instru-

Digitized by Google

mentalities for moralizing our natures. They are dark gateways through which we pass into a temple of light — into the innermost sanctuary of a truer life."

He faces the inflictions against which human nature at first cries out in strongest protest. "The rose Religion grows on a thorn bush, and we must not be afraid to have our fingers lacerated by the thorns if we would pluck the rose. For instance, a person who endures great bodily suffering with fortitude will discover that there is something in him which physical agony cannot overcome, something not of the senses, which all the assaults of the senses are powerless to affect. . . . It is this effect of pain that accounts for the serenity and peace of many patient sufferers, a peace and a serenity which surrounds their beds of misery with a kind of halo." How much truer and nobler this than the fancy that the mind has power to prevent or annihilate all pain!

And then we have the still bolder assertion that sin, too, may be "a dark gateway into a temple of light." "The experience of guilt, for instance, if it leads us to pitilessly honest self-scrutiny and self-judgment, will at the last disclose the marvelous fact that even in the most

Digitized by Google

desperate cases there remains a part of our nature unspoiled by the guilt. We become aware of a power within us, to slough off the guilt as the serpent sloughs off its skin; to triumph over the evil we have done as well as over the evils we have suffered. We realize that there is within us a fount of inexhaustible moral rejuvenation." "In a sense greater than words can convey, those who have had the profoundest experience of guilt are more capable than others of a divine transfiguration of their natures." This is the same truth so exquisitely taught in the parable of the prodigal son; the truth experienced by Paul, by Augustine, by uncounted numbers, down to the latest drunkard saved by some worker of the Salvation Army. It is the truth which, however disguised and alloyed by fable and dogma, has been the source of the true miracles, the moral miracles, of Christianity.

It is the austere beauties, the stern virtues, that winter best displays; and in these selections the dominant note is of struggle and triumph rather than light-hearted happiness. But there is recognition of the sacredness of joy. "Joy is a light which those who possess it are bound to keep burning brightly for the sake of others as well as for their own sake. Every

Digitized by Google

pure joy in the world is so much gain." Very wise and very lofty are the teachings upon love and marriage; the ideal set forth is not more exalted than the happiness depicted is profound. "We are not married on our wedding day; on that day we do but begin to be married. The true marriage is no sudden process, the perpetual interlinking of two souls while life lasts." (And beyond that.) "Marriage is an estate in which we charge ourselves not only with the comfort and the happiness of another, but with the problem of the total spiritual destiny of another. And because we live in our influence, because our life is strongest and purest when our influence is most penetrating, therefore, in the estate of marriage it is possible for us to attain a depth of spiritual development such as can be achieved in no other human relationship whatever."

The stress is constant on the social relation; on living with others, for them and in them. "As light is light when it strikes on objects, so life is life when it smites on other life. We live truly in our radiations. We grow and develop in proportion as we help others to grow and develop." "As soon as we learn to speak and act medicinally, not from personal resentment

Digitized by Google

or under the impulse of personal attraction, but with a view to promoting just the good in others, the whole atmosphere in which we breathe changes; a kind of perpetual sunshine illumines our inner world, the clouds of hate and the mists of passionate feeling dissolve, and peace reigns within the borders of the soul."

Said one who had met Mr. Adler in a single but somewhat intimate interview: "His bearing was most simple and unconscious of self, his talk was quiet, and at moments there was in his face an expression — of sharing the world's burden, of yearning desire and inmost striving to save the lost — which I could only name 'Christ-like.'" The sympathy of spirit with the founder of Christianity is everywhere apparent in these selections. The first of the Beatitudes, "Blessed are the poor in spirit," is recalled when we read here: "The crowning grace of all is humility, in the sense in which it implies and presupposes dignity." And this is the explication: "Dignity is based upon the consciousness of a divine element in human nature, of an infinite aim, a boundless destiny. Humbleness is due to a sense of the incalculable difference which still separates us from the goal."

Digitized by Google

But what can this merely natural religion say on the theme of a hereafter? No demonstration of immortality is attempted. We have simply the expression of a personal conviction: "Such terms as consciousness, individuality, even personality, are but finite screens which give no adequate clew to the infinite for which they stand. Only this I feel warranted in holding fast to — that the root of my selfhood, the best that is in me, my true and only being, cannot perish." From the borderland of the unknown, imagination casts its glance: "Vast possibilities suggest themselves to us of an order of existence wholly different from all that we have ever known; a gleam reaches the eye, as it were, from a far celestial land, and the crimson dawn of a sun of truth appears, to which the splendor of our earthly mornings are as obscurity."

The prospect of our own death, and what may follow it, adds and alters nothing as to our duties, but the loss of those we love touches us most closely in the conduct of life. Here the feet are on firm ground. "The criterion of right relation to the dead is that we are helped, not weakened and disabled by them. Does the remembrance of our departed loved ones have

Digitized by Google

this effect upon us? Does it make us better and purer men and women than we should otherwise have been, stronger if not happier? Do they come to us as gentle monitors in silent hours of thought? Does their approving smile stimulate us to greater bravery for the right, to more earnest self-conquest? Does the pressure of their invisible hands guide us in the better way? If so, then truly blessed is their memory." "When the light of the sun shines through a prism it is broken into beautiful colors, and when the prism is shattered still the light remains. So does the light of life shine resplendent in the forms of our friends, and so, when their forms are broken, still their life remains; and in that life we are united with them; for the life of their life is also our life, and we are one with them by ties indissoluble."

And this is the gospel of a man who has stood unsupported by authority or dogma; who has breasted for many years the fierce tide of New York's materialism; who has all the while been translating his ideals into actualities, raising money, planting kindergartens, establishing a system of education, reforming tenement-houses; who has been fighting wild beasts

Digitized by Google

meanwhile, opposing Tammany, resisting corruption, holding himself ready and prompt for every call of public service. Through all the toil and strife, he has held out to the heart and hope of men this ideal of a divine life, to be realized by each in himself, to be shared, to spread and grow until it shall fill the earth! His message is stirring and triumphant as battle music, and its under notes breathe the deepest peace. What wonder if there be some touch of austerity, some absence of light-hearted happiness? All that will be made good in due time. Already we recognize a fulfillment of the closing word in one of his earlier volumes: "The truth which has made us free will yet make us glad." As the final word from this precious little book, let us take this: "At bottom, the world is to be interpreted in terms of joy, but of a joy that includes all the pain, includes it and transforms it and transcends it."

Digitized by Google

THE MESSAGE OF EMERSON

THE message of Emerson was incarnated in the man himself. Emerson *was* what he taught. The way to hear his message is to get as near as we can to him. Least of all gospels does his gospel require an interpreter.

We get very close access to him as we read his words. He had an extraordinary gift of expressing his inmost self in language. He might have said, but that his modesty forbade, "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life."

Indeed, the writing of Emerson is so full of condensed and vital meaning, that an ordinary mortal can receive but a little of it at a time. After reading half a dozen sentences, we want to shut the book and ponder; or, rather, to go out into the world and try to put those sentences into action. As I turn to the pages of Emerson to find some quotation, my eye falls at random on some utterance so rich, so comprehensive, so brimming with suggestion, that I am moved to throw down my pen. What need to write about Emerson, or about any

Digitized by Google

theme which he has treated? Has he not said it all?

By way partly of diluting the wine for every-day drinking; partly, too, by way of associating the teaching more closely with the teacher's personality, it is good to read a life of Emerson. We are fortunate in our biographies of him. First, there is the admirable book by the man Emerson chose to write his life, James Eliot Cabot. It is a book of moderate compass, some eight hundred pages; very fine in its interpretation of his thought, sympathetic yet judicial; admirable in its candor, and never better than when it speaks of his limitations, — as, the kind of aloofness, the withdrawal from close personal contact, which put as it were a crystalline wall between him and his nearest friends. Then there is the shorter biography by Oliver Wendell Holmes, with the special merit that it is written from the standpoint of a personality and a view of life widely different from Emerson's own. It is an interpretation of the prophet by a man of science, a man of the world, who united critical acumen with light-hearted gaiety and lyric charm. Then we have the delightful view of him in his most familiar relations, as neighbor, fellow-townsman, and in his

Digitized by Google

own family, by the son who was well worthy to write of his father, *Emerson in Concord*, by Edward Waldo Emerson.

Read these biographies, read Emerson's prose, and above all read and absorb his poetry, and you have his message a thousand times better than any exposition by another can give it. But "each one of us has his say"; each makes his homeopathic dilution of the wine of the gods, and adds inevitably some tincture of his own. "All wise things have already been said," wrote Goethe, "nevertheless we must say them again."

The direction and weight of Emerson's message cannot be adequately stated in any series of intellectual propositions attempting to define his position. Of all the literature of thought his is the least capable of reduction to exact terms. If we make the attempt, we either feel that his essential ideas elude us, or, when expressed as scientific generalizations, we often question their soundness. Thus as to the essay on "Compensation," if we try to state with exactness its main thesis, we arrive at something like this assertion: That the operations of the universe manifest everywhere the distribution of perfect ethical justice; not merely

Digitized by Google

that such justice is the ultimate outcome, but that it is apparent to intelligent human insight in the events of each passing hour; that in a moral sense the books of the universe are balanced every moment, and may so be read by every seeing eye.[1] But this proposition appears so incredible, that we conclude either that we have failed to rightly grasp the writer's thought, or else that he has gone beyond his depth and asserted what he cannot make good. Judging from the level of such intelligence as we possess, our best attitude toward this essay — and the same holds good of a great deal of Emerson's work — seems to be to appropriate its many flashes of profound insight, to pass by some passages as too high or too deep for us, and to recognize as the net result, not a comprehensive formula of truth, but an immense suggestiveness and a dynamic impulse that wakens our entire nature.

If this want of exactness and symmetry of statement be imputed as in some sense a lim-

[1] I hear some loyal Emersonian exclaim that the master's teaching cannot be construed into any such paradox as this. Perhaps not, — but I should like to have the objector try to put the main thesis of the essay into ten lines of clear, logical statement, and see if he can give any more rational interpretation.

Digitized by Google

itation, on the other hand it facilitates the penetrating power of the message to men of all creeds and all philosophies. It has been finely said of Emerson that he was "an iconoclast without a hammer, who took down our idols so tenderly that it seemed like an act of worship." But in truth he hardly takes down our idols at all, — our dogmas of religion and philosophy may remain in their niches, except so far as they openly affront justice and mercy. His thoughts go down to the deep heart of things, below the incrustations and crystallizations of the system-makers. And so he is welcomed and beloved by churchmen of every degree, by the pantheist and by the agnostic. Tyndall acknowledges a vital impulse to scientific study from his writings. Indeed, one can scarcely read the frank disclosures of any open and growing mind within the last half-century without coming upon Emerson's traces. The most surprising instance I have found is given by Andrew D. White, who, as minister to Russia, came into personal relation with Pobedonostzeff, the head and front of the reactionary forces in church and state, and found him a man of sincerity, humanity and religion, according to his lights. Pobedonostzeff

Digitized by Google

expressed the warmest admiration for Emerson's writings, and of the books he had translated into Russian the first was *The Imitation of Christ*, the second, a volume of Emerson's *Essays!*

Now, a message so spiritual and so tenuous, so deficient in scientific exactness, yet so profoundly moving to the whole range of man's higher faculties, may perhaps best be valued and appraised in terms not of logic, but of character. Emerson dealt with the dynamic elements of the soul. Let us then characterize him by his influence on those qualities in man which are so basal that they underlie all creeds and philosophies, and are the bedrock of our living.

His influence upon us is best to be described in terms of personal character. Emerson's message, let us say, then, is essentially an impulse toward Fidelity, toward Open-mindedness, toward Energy. The outcome of these is strength and joy and conscious harmony with this living universe.

Let us look at these three qualities, one by one — Fidelity, Open-mindedness, Energy.

Moral fidelity is the groundwork and atmosphere of all that Emerson says and all that he

Digitized by Google

is. It is habitually assumed rather than expressed. He says less in terms about duty than many another moralist. We are to remember the environment in which he wrote. That was New England in its ripest and most distinct period; when its peculiar quality had acquired full body and flavor, and before it had merged in a national and cosmopolitan life. Now of this typical New England, at its best and most characteristic, from the Pilgrim fathers down, the key-word was Duty. At the heart of theologies that without it were grim and dead; half smothered under fantastic doctrines of imputed merit and salvation by grace alone, yet bursting into clear flame in the life of the saint which redeemed his creed; the bedrock of the austere yet tender family life, the industry, the social and political development, — Duty was the watchword and inspiration of the nobler, the typical New Englander. The official leader in New England society for two centuries was the preacher, and the preacher alternated between exposition of a mystic and metaphysical plan of salvation, and insistence on the obligations of conscience. The community at last was over-preached, saturated until receptivity was almost lost. So Emerson,

Digitized by Google

in his own nature fresh as the morning, drops the hackneyed phraseology of truth become trite, and takes for granted the supremacy of Duty, as he takes for granted the law of gravitation. Each is ever-present, and too well known to require constant assertion.

It may be — I do not know — that for those nurtured in a less bracing moral climate there needs a more distinct teaching of moral obligation in its simplicity and absolute authority. Yet where else is set forth a gospel of right living so searching, so convincing, so comprehensive as in his *Conduct of Life*? What watchwords are more inspiring than some of Emerson's familiar utterances on this supreme theme?

> So nigh to grandeur is our dust,
> So near is God to man,
> When Duty whispers low *Thou must*,
> The youth replies *I can!*

That duty is not only supreme, but is the key to all high revelation, is the characteristic thought of Emerson. Here is a quotation from his private journal, which illustrates the man himself: "Unpalatable must be always the argument based upon the text, 'If ye do my Father's will ye shall know of the doctrine,'

Digitized by Google

and almost incapable of being used in conversation. It is felt as a gross personality. Yet it is a good topic for the preacher, and a better topic for the closet."

In the same passage, he shows the idea here so quietly expressed in the guise it wore to himself of a supreme passion, — to him, whom some call cold. "Milton describes himself in his letter to Diodati as enamored of moral perfection. He did not love it more than I. That which I cannot yet declare has been my angel from childhood until now. It has separated me from man. It has watered my pillow. It has driven sleep from my bed. It has tortured me for my guilt. It has inspired me with hope. It cannot be defeated by my defects. It cannot be questioned, though all the martyrs apostatize. It is always the glory that shall be revealed; it is the open secret of the universe. And it is only the feebleness and dust of the observers that makes it future, — the whole is now potentially at the bottom of his heart."

Such a passage lifts us, like a noble strain of music, into a region transcending articulate thought. Yet the theme is simple as a child's word; it is just the longing for moral perfection. "Blessed are they that do hunger and

Digitized by Google

thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled."

In all we go on to say of Emerson, let it be remembered that his constant atmosphere is this allegiance to the highest known right; an allegiance in him so perfect and constant that it is habitually unexpressed and as it were unconscious.

I find no better word than Open-mindedness to express Emerson's characteristic mental attitude, his way of approach to truth, and the quality we may catch from him. There is room here for a whole chapter on the strictly philosophical aspect of Emerson's work; on his acceptance of the distinction drawn by German thinkers between the two faculties, — the Understanding, which follows knowledge step by step, by analysis, logic, argumentation; and the Reason, which apprehends highest reality as directly as the sight apprehends external objects. Emerson's constant reliance for himself was upon this Reason or Intuition. This was the intellectual badge not only of him, but of the little group around him known as Transcendentalists. With this was connected the swiftness and ardor of their work; the diversity of their results; their discord with the grow-

Digitized by Google

ing tendency to scientific methods; and also the transiency of their influence as a group. For this intuitional method is the bow of Ulysses, which only the master's hand can bend. The personal impressions of the individual observer, unsupported by definite proofs, are valuable chiefly when the individual is so finely organized and highly equipped as to be himself an organ of spiritual vision, — the highest product of humanity, the medium of the loftiest truths. Such a seer was Plato, such was Jesus, such was Emerson. But such only in a very inferior degree were the little company of "Transcendentalists" who tried to follow Emerson's way, and soon they either betook themselves to humbler paths or were distanced by those content with the methods of observation, comparison, and induction, by which modern science has advanced.

Not to dwell further on any comparison of the intuitive with the inductive method in philosophy, it will suffice here to characterize what I have called the Open-mindedness of Emerson. In its everyday application it is simply to hold one's self observant, attentive, receptive, to the people and things about us. The power to do this in any considerable de-

Digitized by Google

gree implies a great deal. The mere desire to see things as they are means subordination of prejudice, and freedom from the self-absorption of care. It means a "heart at leisure from itself" — exquisite phrase! In our age of hurry and hustle, leisure seems sometimes as much lost as the Garden of Eden. Lost? It rests with us to rediscover it for ourselves. "Here or nowhere is thy America!" says Carlyle to the youth impatient for a new world. Here or nowhere is your Eden, is the constant word of Emerson. Leisure of the spirit, the eye open to all beauty, the mind to all truth, the heart to all sympathy, — it is among us yet; if you and I possess it not, be sure some neighbor not far away holds the golden secret.

This open mind, — sensitive as a mirror, serene as a mountain lake, — Emerson habitually turns toward the natural world in its order and in its beauty, toward men and women, toward whatever supreme reality expresses itself through Nature and through humanity. How immeasurable is our debt to Emerson simply for his teaching us to live outdoors! A hundred and a thousand teachers and singers and story-tellers are to-day inviting us out into the hills and woods.

Digitized by Google

Most can raise the flower now,
Since all have got the seed.

But scarce and precious was the seed in the days of our grandfathers or even of our fathers. This close, sympathetic, passionate love of Nature's beauty, seems one of the latest time-births. In its early forms it is old as Homer and the Psalms, but the rich flowering we know scarcely finds expression before Wordsworth. Wordsworth and Emerson, I think, voiced it rather than originated it. It was in the air, and you may trace it in the letters of people unknown to fame and not taught, not consciously at least, by the great masters. But Wordsworth in England, and Emerson in America, led a vast, a happy throng, out into the presence and dear companionship of the great Mother.

Emerson finds in Nature a mystic symbol of divinity, but first and always he notes the near and common beauty in itself: —

Thou canst not wave thy staff in air,
Or dip thy paddle in the lake,
But it carves the bow of beauty there,
And the ripples in rhymes the oar forsake.

He sees plant and bird and bee as they are, not through another's eyes or the printed page: —

Digitized by Google

> See thou bring not to field and stone
> The fancies found in books;
> Leave authors' eyes and fetch your own
> To brave the landscape's looks.

He turns his sympathetic gaze toward men and women. He is more intimately and familiarly at home with these than with the humblebee and titmouse. He sees men and women, as it were, in their essence and sublimation, rather than in their individuality and their homely everyday guise. But we — do we not habitually see them only in their everyday apparel, or in their outer self with its superficialities and oddities? It is only under some rare illumination that we discern the inner, nobler self. When a man falls in love, he sees — for a while at least — the ideal self of the woman. The mother crooning over her baby dreams of the lofty possibilities of his manhood. But Emerson sees all mankind with the lover's idealizing eyes: —

"Let the good soul incarnated in some woman's form, poor and sad and single, in some Dolly or Joan, go out to service, and sweep chambers and scour floors, and its effulgent daybeams cannot be muffled or hid, but to sweep and scour will instantly appear supreme

Digitized by Google

and beautiful actions, the top and radiance of human life, and all people will get mops and brooms; until, lo! suddenly the good soul has enshrined itself in some other form, and does some other deed, and that is now the flower and head of all living Nature."

In the landscape, in the bee flitting among the flowers, in the man or woman walking through the fields or streets, Emerson sees always the symbol of some higher reality. To him, matter is the garb of spirit. Each human soul is the ray of a universal and divine soul. Order is everywhere; seeming chaos is order not understood by us; and the universal order is inspired by benignity. The consummate impression of the world we see is beauty unspeakable, and this beauty is the veil, or rather the animate and speaking face, of the supreme reality — a reality transcending our highest thoughts and imaginations.

He rarely uses the conventional words of religion. He shrinks from that way of speech which names God "as familiarly as the man around the corner." He writes to a friend, "I never willingly say anything concerning 'God' in cold blood." That word he keeps for the supreme occasions. He brings an unworn name,

Digitized by Google

"The Over-Soul," yet even that he uses sparingly. He disclaims knowledge on points where theologians are fluent and positive, and where sometimes the human heart longs for definite knowledge. But if he will not affirm "personal" of the Deity, he looks toward some higher summit which "superpersonal" suggests. The intellectual certainties which we ask for he easily dispenses with. For he lives in a region of which trust is the native air. Nay, trust is too weak a word. He dwells in a calm certainty of supreme and all-sufficient good, a certainty which alike tranquillizes and energizes.

As was said of the moral sense, so it is to be said of the religious sense — the conviction of a moral and beneficent order in the universe, and a sublime destiny for the human soul. This religious sense came to Emerson by inheritance; it was everywhere present in his environment; it furnishes the ground and atmosphere of his thought. This is said especially of that New England which came in him to its consummate flowering. In a wider view, it might be claimed that to humanity as a whole, in its larger movement, belongs essentially the religious sense, as sure and lasting a result of evolution as the power of speech or sight.

Digitized by Google

Yet in our day the assumption of a spiritual order in the universe, which to Emerson is so sure that it needs no proof, and so sufficing that it needs no definition, — to many, in the present ebb of the tide, this seems not only not self-evident, but impossible of belief or at least of appropriation for intimate use. And to such, Emerson will fail to speak home in this region of spiritual consciousness. Let such not try to force their convictions. For it belongs to the essence of this Emersonian open-mindedness, and goes deeper even than conviction as to spiritual realities, that we be sincere with ourselves. When to Emerson the sacrament of the communion became unreal, he gave it up; when his church told him it was indispensable to the ministry, he regretfully left the ministry. We may be sure that had any article of his own creed, however dear to him, lost its hold on his sincerest thought, he would have given it up. Nay, we need not speak hypothetically. One article of belief for which the heart yearns, — his heart no less than ours, — the assurance of a personal hereafter, — this seemed to his thought a matter of uncertainty, and in his essay on Immortality he records his uncertainty. Yet even in that essay the hope which

Digitized by Google

alternates with the doubt, and the conviction of some good destiny for man and the universe, outsoars in its gladness and aspiration the professed certainties which dogmatists are wont to avow. And we see later, in the greatest exigency of life, when Thought's weak endeavor is surpassed by the intimations of Love and Loss, the hope rises into sublime assurance.

It is good to hush our own thoughts for a while as we look at the aspect which the world assumed to Emerson. Two highest aspects, we may say, disclosed themselves to him. In one, the beauty of Nature is a symbol of divine reality, so full and satisfying that the soul beholding it asks no more articulate revelation: —

> Then I said: "I covet truth;
> Beauty is unripe childhood's cheat;
> I leave it behind with the games of youth"; —
> As I spoke, beneath my feet
> The ground-pine curled its pretty wreath,
> Running over the club-moss burrs;
> I inhaled the violet's breath;
> Around me stood the oaks and firs;
> Pine-cones and acorns lay on the ground;
> Over me soared the eternal sky,
> Full of light and of deity;
> Again I saw, again I heard,
> The rolling river, the morning bird; —
> Beauty through my senses stole;
> I yielded myself to the perfect whole.

Digitized by Google

In the poem called "The Sphinx," which he set as the first in the volume of his poems, as if giving the keynote, he states the problem of humanity's wretchedness as frankly as could the darkest pessimist. Against this he sets the assertion of the most confident optimism. Finally, he translates the answer into a picture. In a dozen wonderful lines he groups the visible splendors of the world. Take, he says, this beauty as the answer to your soul of life's riddle — an answer transcending articulate speech: —

Uprose the merry Sphinx,
And crouched no more in stone;
She melted into purple cloud;
She silvered in the moon;
She spired into a yellow flame;
She flowered in blossoms red;
She flowed into a foaming wave;
She stood Monadnoc's head.
Thorough a thousand voices
Spoke the universal dame;
"Who telleth one of my meanings
Is master of all I am."

This is to Emerson the supreme aspect of the external world — beauty as the revelation of divinity. But there is a more intimate relation of humanity with divinity — it is the conscious union felt within man himself: —

Digitized by Google

> Draw if thou canst the mystic line
> Rightly severing his from thine,
> Which is human, which divine.

This supreme experience is perhaps best conveyed in a few passages of direct and simple prose. "The soul gives itself, alone, original, and pure, to the Lonely, Original, and Pure, who, on that condition, gladly inhabits, leads and speaks through it." And this, freshly given to us by his son (in the sketch prefacing the Centenary edition of his works) from his journal: "When I wish, it is permitted me to say, These hands, this body, this history of Waldo Emerson, are profane and wearisome, but I, I descend not to mix myself with that or with any man. Above his life, above all creatures, I flow down forever a sea of benefit into races of individuals. Nor can the stream ever roll backward, or the sin or death of a man taint the immutable energy which distributes itself into men, as the sun into rays or the sea into drops."

As children sitting at the feet of an astronomer listen to his stories of the stars, so we listen to this watcher of the skies, and thrill with the sense he imparts of the divine universe revealed to him.

Perhaps in every unspoiled human heart,

Digitized by Google

whatever its intellectual questioning or skepticism, the great traditional words of religion, — God, Christ, eternity, forgiveness, salvation, the higher life — touch some answering chord of deep experience. Perhaps unable to accept any formula of the church; quite unable to translate its own transport, anguish, victory, into adequate terms of a spiritual universe, — the soul yet has at least momentary consciousness as of vital and absolute relation. Beyond almost any other Emerson finds words corresponding to these deep intimations. They attempt no exactness; they are words, as Matthew Arnold says, thrown out at some object too great for verbal apprehension — but they reach the deep springs of experience and imagination. Thus he says: "The rapture of the Moravian and Quietist, the revival of the Calvinistic churches, the experiences of the Methodists, are varying forms of that shudder of awe and delight with which the individual always mingles with the universal soul."

Passing beyond the interior sphere of personal emotion, looking forth upon the universe of Nature and man, Emerson in one passage characterizes his unnamed Deity; recognizing some all-pervading power, inclusive of that

Digitized by Google

evolution which natural processes display, and, typified by that evolution, a higher force within the soul itself. It is the close of his "May Day": —

> Under gentle types, my Spring
> Masks the might of Nature's king,
> An energy that reaches thorough
> From Chaos to the dawning morrow;
> Into all our human plight,
> The soul's pilgrimage and flight;
> In city or in solitude,
> Step by step, lifts bad to good,
> Without halting, without rest,
> Lifting Better up to Best;
> Planting seeds of knowledge pure,
> Through earth to ripen, through heaven endure.

With Fidelity and Open-mindedness I have named Energy as a characteristic of Emerson. There is scarcely need to cite examples of a trait which pervades every utterance. Open his books at random, and whatever sentiment you encounter, the expression of it rouses the soul to action. We feel this energizing power even when he is urging the attitude of receptivity. "Give me health and a day, and I will make the pomp of emperors ridiculous." The trust which he teaches is born of courage and action. "Go face the fire at sea, or the cholera in your friend's house, or the burglar in your

Digitized by Google

own, or what danger lies in the way of duty, knowing you are guarded by the cherubim of destiny." His essay on "Self-Reliance" is a gospel of manhood, and the word might be the running-title of all his pages. He bids us, Do the thing you fear to do; if you shrink from high places, climb the tall pine and throw down its topmost bough.

His energy is inspiring, because its source is in himself. It is not a mere conception of the intellect, but is rooted in character. An idea, to strike home, must on the one side have its living counterpart in the will of him who utters it, and on the other side it must find expression in fit and exact language. The trait, the thought, and the word make the perfect whole.

It may at first surprise us to find energy so highly developed in a man whose field of activity was chiefly meditation and its verbal expression. It is true indeed that Emerson served some considerable apprenticeship in the school of practical affairs. He was trained in the austere ways of a New England household of limited means; his boyhood was hardy as well as studious; he had always to earn his livelihood; physical delicacy beset the years of young manhood; heavy griefs fell on him in the successive

Digitized by Google

loss of brothers, wife, child. Yet he emerged into conditions of outward serenity. What room, asks the beset and struggling man of affairs, what room or call for high energy in an existence which had for its staple daily employment a stroll from his house to Walden Pond, and the jotting down of a few sentences?

For one answer we may take Emerson's own report of the difficulties with which the thinker has to contend. If the scholar, he writes, feels abased and humbled in reading of the hardships and battles of the Arctic explorer — he is not working as he should!

Some forms of human activity find their analogy in the thunder-storm or avalanche. Other energies of the soul may be likened to Nature's way when in a still night of frost she transforms all the streams and pools into polished adamant. Or, better, we may compare Emerson's power to that of a day in our late April, when swift magic wakes a million buds and clothes the bare woods in mists of color.

Emerson's achievement was twofold. First, he lived in himself the life of the Spirit, with extraordinary genuineness and power, and largely without the aid of the traditional and conventional forms which had seemed indispensable

Digitized by Google

but were becoming impossible. Further, he sent home to the consciousness of other men the profound and subtle truths of the spiritual life in new-minted language, strangely effective to penetrate and possess. A characteristic modern form of mechanical achievement is the construction of artillery which will hurl missives deep into opposing walls of steel. Emerson's was the power to penetrate minds indurated by custom and indifference with winged words of illumination and transformation.

At a time when the old theologies were breaking up, and science and history were undermining the foundations of beloved and cherished sanctuaries, Emerson stood, "like Teneriffe or Atlas unremoved." He was no defender, no apologist. He saw and spoke the vision of highest, gladdest truth as fresh and resistless as the sunrise. He taught, he lived, a religion based on the clearest and deepest certainties of daily life, and blossoming into joyful consciousness of universal beauty and universal love. A century has passed since his birth; the world has moved on with an ever swifter rush of thought, discovery, action; yet to-day men look up to him, and light at his

Digitized by Google

radiance the torches to guide their feet along the new paths.

Was not the life in which this was wrought a focus of energy, compared with which the toil that amasses fortunes or conquers armies is slight?

The outcome of the qualities which I have named, by no exact analysis or classification, Fidelity, Open-mindedness, Energy, — the outcome of these is a temper of pure joys. To the true lover of Emerson, his secret is not only goodness, not only strength, but gladness profound and suffusing. And here again, the characteristic is found less in explicit declarations than in the pervading tone. It is most pervasive and intense in the poems, and it was his poetry which Emerson felt to be his highest message. Strong souls do not make many words about their happiness. Its best expression is its outshining from their faces, its inshining into other lives. Now and then there breaks from Emerson some word of joy that must voice itself. "In the midst of a puddly moor, I am afraid to say how glad I am!" Sometimes he speaks plainly of the root and source of the care-free temper. "The lessons of the moral sentiments are, once for all, an

Digitized by Google

emancipation from that anxiety which takes the joy out of all life. It teaches a great peace. It comes from the highest place. . . . It is a commandment of every moment and in every condition of life to do the duty of that moment and to abstain from doing the wrong."

The gladness which pulsates in his lines is a sure and steadfast joy. It is —

> A sacred and homefelt delight,
> A sober certainty of waking bliss.

Its frequent ministers, its favorite symbols, are the scenes of Nature. So in his poem "Waldeinsamkeit," "wood-solitude": —

> Sheen will tarnish, honey cloy,
> And merry is only a mask of sad,
> But, sober on a fund of joy,
> The woods at heart are glad.
>
> There the great Planter plants
> Of fruitful worlds the grain,
> And with a million spells enchants
> The souls that walk in pain.

In those last lines, what tenderness for human sorrow! Nature, say the shallow and exacting, is unsympathetic with man's grief. Ah, she offers him a diviner boon, — she does not mourn with him, but she bids him to bathe his grief in the healing fountain of a beauty which is

Digitized by Google

sacramental and divine. Beauty, to the seeing heart, is the face of love.

Of the human symbols of happiness, take this picture of a baby, viewed by a poet's eyes: —

> The babe by its mother
> Lies bathed in joy;
> Glide the hours uncounted, —
> The sun is its toy;
> Shines the peace of all being,
> Without cloud in its eyes;
> And the sum of the world
> In soft miniature lies.

We cannot do entire justice to Emerson without a word as to his limitations. Limitations, not faults; and in the main they were necessary conditions of his genius and work. They are almost all implied in what he says of himself, not without a touch of regret: "I am not a hand, but an eye." His life lay not in society and action so much as in thought. There was his proper work, and he could not do it without secluding himself somewhat from the region in which most of us do our work and learn our lesson.

One special limitation, however, is to be mentioned, judging him wholly in the intellectual realm; and this has already been touched

Digitized by Google

on. His characteristic method is insight, intuition, and not argumentation or proof. Questioned as to the arguments for the immanence of God, he replies: "I could not possibly give you one of the arguments you cruelly hint at on which any doctrine of mine stands, for I do not know what arguments mean in reference to an expression of thought. I delight in telling what I think, but if you ask me why I dare to think so or why it is so, I am the most helpless of men." Now, where the thinker is an Emerson, and the subject such as the immanence of God, we may be well content to listen when he tells us "what he thinks," and care not to ask for arguments. But with lesser minds and on subjects of other kinds, we must sometimes insist on the homelier methods of argument and proof. He habitually teaches "Instincts are the best guides." But that depends considerably on whose instincts, and on what topics. Instinct does not help us far as to the relation of the hypothenuse of a right-angled triangle to the base and perpendicular; yet that is a matter which it has been necessary to settle, and the way has lain through a succession of proofs. So, instinct or intuition is not a sufficient guide for many of the practical

Digitized by Google

problems of society. What is the duty of the citizen of a constitutional republic, in which human slavery has a chartered right? What is the duty of a citizen when his nation has unjustly conquered another people, and is holding them in subjection, there being great uncertainty as to their present capacity for self-government? Such complicated questions call for the careful, painful, step-by-step methods of a mind and heart like Lincoln's. They are not to be settled by mere intuitions and instincts. And the incapacity of the Transcendentalists, who took their note from Emerson and exaggerated it, — their incapacity for these mixed problems of a highly developed society, — was one reason for their limited and transient influence.

"An eye," he called himself, "and not a hand." For most of us, life is a business of the hand more than of the eye; of action and society more than of contemplation. And hence there are some necessary divergences between Emerson's experience and temper and those of humanity in the mass, — a difference not wholly measured by the fact that he stood higher than most. A part of his habitual serenity lies in his immunity from petty cares and

Digitized by Google

toils; an immunity legitimate for him, because only so could he do his work; but for us forbidden, if our work lies mostly in those very cares and toils. He writes: "It is strange how painful is the actual world — the painful kingdom of time and space. There dwell care, canker and fear. With thought, with the ideal, is immortal hilarity, the rose of joy. Round it all the muses sing. But with names and persons and the practical interests of to-day and yesterday is grief."

Yes, but the furnace fire must be tended, or the house will be cold; the babe, no longer "the peace of all being without cloud in its eyes," is crying lustily and must be nursed; there is a note due at the bank next week, and funds must be got to meet it. "Immortal hilarity and the rose of joy" must needs be postponed, often and long: well if the rose has one month of blooming in the twelve!

Again, in comparison with other moralists, he seems little conscious of the necessity of the daily battle for moral victory within ourselves. The old religion at its best is clear and strong as to this. Its constant note is: —

> My soul, be on thy guard.
> Ten thousand foes arise!

Digitized by Google

— a note of heroic combat. Nor is it peculiar to Christianity. Epictetus, Marcus Aurelius, all strong souls in all religions, have this warrior note, — the constant recognition of the element of combat and often of sacrifice, — the burden to be carried, the temptation to be overcome, the worser self to be trodden under foot. Now Emerson recognizes this moral combat, and inspires us for it; but with him the victory seems won and the higher state become a thing of habitude. Largely this seems to be because he had won the personal victory, early and thoroughly. A noble inheritance and a whole-souled effort from earliest years, had brought him to a state closely resembling that which religionists have named "entire sanctification." Have we not been fortunate enough to know some one or two in whom, with perhaps no apparent genius or intellectual distinction, there was this habitual, entire, serene discharge of duty, and contentment therewith: —

> Glad hearts, without reproach or blot,
> Who do thy will, and know it not.

I think this is why Emerson, seemingly less cognizant of the moral struggle than most of our teachers, helps us more than they. He is

Digitized by Google

to us not so much a fellow-combatant as a victor, — and the sense of his victory is our help.

It is no blame to him that it is not his special gift to reach the abandoned, the desperate sinners. To touch these with new life, to work in them a moral revolution, to bring them through repentance and redemption into the joy of the returned prodigal — a joy whose depth and tenderness the righteous scarcely know — this is the work of other apostles.

Once again, that expression, "not a hand, but an eye," may recall a thought which Mrs. Stowe has expressed. We are told, she says, that when Jesus did his work of mercy, he put his hands on the palsied, the blind, the lepers. That personal touch was the symbol and expression of the yearning and saving affection which alone works life's miracles of redemption. It is a truth which touches the heart of Christianity. It is sometimes asked by way of cavil if Emerson's followers expect him to supersede Christianity and Christ. No, for Emerson himself is a fruit of twenty centuries of Christianity. He sees with new clearness the vision, he gives with new force the message, which were the soul of Christianity. Education has

Digitized by Google

gone on, the plant has developed and perfected itself, and this is its new blossom.

"All the world is wiser than any one man." A great religion in its inmost depth and highest purity, as it has grown in millions of hearts and been sublimated by unnumbered saints and seers, is greater than any individual's interpretation, or new reading. The soul of Christianity is love. If we said love is the soul of Buddhism, that, too, may be true; — only we ourselves stand in the historical line of Christianity. And even the myth, the fable of Christianity, is a parable of sacred truth. Jesus, it is said, was God, and willingly came down from heaven to suffer and die for men that he might save them. The meaning of this to the heart is: the highest, divinest thing is to leave one's private heaven to share the woes of the unhappy and by sharing heal them.

Emerson subscribed to this with full loyalty. He said, "The story of Jesus is the story of every man writ large." And, in honoring Emerson, we need not forget the men and women who have illustrated the truth he spoke, in harder fields than those of literature. There is Father Damien, burying himself among the lepers. There is the immortal story told in

Digitized by Google

America's noblest sculpture, — Shaw, child of the fairest inheritance, and endowed with noble gifts, riding to his death among the humble black brethren to whom he has given himself. There is Armstrong, leader and savior of a race, saying at the end of his life of service: "I do not know what sacrifice means." And these are types of a multitude.

Emerson in his own way gave himself to mankind as heartily as these heroes of action. He was as true to his mission as they to theirs. And he gave one new and fine interpretation to the gospel of service. It was this: That we serve mankind best when we are true to our own ideal, and fill the possibilities of our individual manhood. We are not all called to be missionaries. He would not forsake his own vocation in response to the importunate calls of devotees of special causes, most of whom lost something of balance, and became one-sided and cranky. He spoke strongly and fearlessly for the slave, but he would not leave his work to join an abolition crusade. He said, "I have my own slaves to free — the thoughts imprisoned in men's minds."

> This is Love's nobility, —
> Not to scatter bread and gold,
> Goods and raiment, bought and sold;

Digitized by Google

But to hold fast his simple sense,
And speak the speech of innocence,
And with hand and body and blood
To make his bosom's counsel good.
He that feeds men serveth few;
He serves all who dares be true.

Emerson, it is sometimes said by way of criticism, habitually chooses to look away from the dark and tragic elements in human life. He did so deliberately and avowedly. Having faced the Sphinx, and found his answer, he will not linger among the shadows. Sunshine he takes as man's element: —

It seemeth not to me
That the high gods love tragedy,
For Saadi sat in the sun
And thanks was his contrition;
For hair-cloth and for bloody whips,
Had active hands and smiling lips;
And yet his runes he rightly read,
And to his folk his message sped.
Sunshine in his heart transferred
Lighted each transparent word.

Yet, the night follows the day; and on the sons of Adam inevitably fall pain, grief, disaster, death. Can Emerson blend these with his symphony? Can he interweave with his strain of triumph that pathetic minor? I think we might doubt as to that, had we only his

Digitized by Google

prose; so resolutely, so persistently, does he turn away from the black and ugly things. But in his poetry there opens a deeper revelation. There is one poem which touches us all the more because it is not triumphant, but speaks simply the unconsoled human grief. We like sometimes to have our prophet stand beside us on our homely level. We wish sometimes — at least I do — that before the enigmas of the universe, in place of his happy acquiescence, Emerson would sometimes say, "I don't know, and I wish I did!" In the shadow-land of sorrow he does come to the level of the sad and unconsoled, in the tender "Dirge" for the brothers who were his inmost companions.

But, in a still deeper grief, he voices a different experience. He lost his first child, when scarce past infancy, — a son, as others tell us, of rarest loveliness and promise. In "Threnody," the father's heart opens itself. The traits of the lost darling are dwelt on, in all their simplicity and homeliness; the grief is profound; philosophy and religion are helpless for a while before the human cry, "My son, my son!" Then, in this extremity, comes back the light he has lived by — but now grown tenderer, more celestial: —

Digitized by Google

To be alone wilt thou begin
When worlds of lovers hem thee in?
To-morrow, when the masks shall fall
That dizen Nature's carnival,
The pure shall see by their own will,
Which overflowing Love shall fill,
'T is not within the force of fate
The fate-conjoined to separate.

Past utterance, and past belief,
And past the blasphemy of grief,
The mysteries of Nature's heart;
And though no Muse can these impart,
Throb thine with Nature's throbbing breast,
And all is clear from east to west.

Wilt thou not ope thy heart to know
What rainbows teach, and sunsets show?
Verdict which accumulates
From lengthening scroll of human fates,
Voice of earth to earth returned,
Prayers of saints that inly burned, —
Saying, *What is excellent,*
As God lives, is permanent;
Hearts are dust, hearts' loves remain,
Heart's love will meet thee again.

Revere the Maker; fetch thine eye
Up to his style, and manners of the sky.
Not of adamant and gold
Built he heaven stark and cold;
No, but a nest of bending reeds,
Flowering grass and scented weeds;
Or like a traveler's fleeing tent,
Or bow above the tempest bent;
Built of tears and sacred flames,
And virtue reaching to its aims;

Digitized by Google

Built of furtherance and pursuing,
Not of spent deeds, but of doing.
Silent rushes the swift Lord
Through ruined systems still restored,
Broadsowing, bleak and void to bless,
Plants with worlds the wilderness;
Waters with tears of ancient sorrow
Apples of Eden ripe to-morrow;
House and tenant go to ground,
Lost in God, in Godhead found.

Emerson, it is sometimes said, gives up personality, as something to be merged at last in some impersonal whole. But mark his crowning word, "Lost in God, in Godhead *found*." Do we truly know our dearest ones, until we have felt them as blended with some divine, supreme reality; till we have recognized in their love the touch of a celestial love; till we have felt them ensphered with us in some all-embracing unity? Such momentary consciousness thrills us, — is it not our highest hope that we may find its continuance, growth, perfection? Is not the message which death brings to love a promise not of mere repetition and prolonging of the earthly relation, but rather of its sublimation? —

Lost in God, in Godhead found.

What better final word can we say of Emer-

Digitized by Google

son than that beyond all other teachers he is wise and helpful in that which is our chief concern, the right conduct of life? Compare him with the author who is habitually spoken of as wisest and highest of all, Shakespeare. For guidance, wisdom, help in the conduct of life, — its conduct toward noble ideals, and in a resolute temper, — how much does Shakespeare give us? He shows us many kinds of men and women, but he shows very few moral heroes or saints — except (a great exception) some exquisite women. We go to him for poetry, for pictures, for humor, for subtle reading and picturesque presentation of humanity, rather than for ideals that satisfy our aspirations, or for powerful impulse toward virtue. I have seen a Shakespeare calendar, — a passage for every day in the year, — well selected, and of course with intellectual wealth; but there was scarcely a word to nerve one to face his day bravely, to make him glad in being alive, or to bring him into closer union with his kind. How many calendars, birthday books, volumes of selections, from Emerson, are there? And in every one of them, on every page, you light on some word that guides, or energizes, or gladdens. You need not look to selections. Open

Digitized by Google

his essays or his poems at random, and you can hardly lay down the book without finding your way clearer before you, the sky bluer above you.

I take the keynote of Emerson's message to be moral fidelity. It is no original note, — it is old as the moral life of mankind; a note struck by Hebrew psalmist and prophet, by Socrates and Epictetus; spoken persuasively by our Ben Franklin; the word of all true preachers and singers; the strand of gold that brightens the tangled web of humanity. Note how in Emerson it is intimately inwrought with all that is highest and most characteristic. Take, for instance, the idea of pantheism as he has expressed it in "Brahma." In that clear, mystic verse, he celebrates the one, all-pervading, universal life. It is a life which flows through and unites even the murderer and his victim. It underlies all conditions, all experiences. The conceptions of bygone men, the gods as the Greek imagined them, the doubt of the doubter, the rapture of the saint, — all these are manifestations of the all-life. But the consciousness of this supreme relation, — a consciousness far above all common happiness, — to whom is it given?

Digitized by Google

If the red slayer think he slays,
  Or if the slain think he is slain,
They know not well the subtle ways
  I keep, and pass, and turn again.

Far or forgot to me is near;
  Shadow and sunlight are the same;
The vanished gods to me appear;
  And one to me are shame and fame.

They reckon ill who leave me out,
  When me they fly, I am the wings;
I am the doubter and the doubt,
  And I the hymn the Brahmin sings.

The strong gods pine for my abode,
  And pine in vain the sacred Seven;
But thou, meek lover of the good!
  Find me, and turn thy back on Heaven.

Meek lover of the good, — he it is who has the key of the sublime realization. That is the thought which differentiates Emerson's conception of the universe from a dream of the speculative intellect.

In the verses entitled "Freedom," the poet tells us he once had hoped to impart in words the secret of his vision and his joy; to thrill and enfranchise the hearts of men by his message; but the secret is unspeakable, too intimate and sacred to find words. Yet the way is open; the way to the glad vision of beauty and divinity,

Digitized by Google

to conscious communion with the power which from the brute evolves man, and in man develops angelic powers and relations. The way may be found — and how?

> Once I wished I might rehearse
> Freedom's pæan in my verse,
> That the slave who caught the strain
> Should throb until he snapped his chain.
> But the Spirit said, Not so;
> Speak it not, or speak it low;
> Name not lightly to be said,
> Gift too precious to be prayed,
> Passion not to be expressed
> But in heaving of the breast:
> Yet, — wouldst thou the mountain find
> Where this deity is shrined,
> Who gives to seas and sunset skies
> Their unspent beauty of surprise,
> And, when it lists him, waken can
> Brute or savage into man;
> Or, if in thy heart he shine,
> Blends the starry fates with thine,
> Draws angels nigh to dwell with thee,
> And makes thy thoughts archangels be;
> Freedom's secret wilt thou know?
> Counsel not with flesh and blood;
> Loiter not for cloak or food;
> Right thou feelest, rush to do!

Into that last line, with its six little words, he has put the heart of his message, and given the key of his heaven.

Yet there is one homelier word that comes closer home to most men. These transports,

Digitized by Google

visions, ecstasies, — by most of us they can be reached if at all only in rare glimpses, brief moments; to many they are little but words, words heard muffled, as if in another room. For us, the common folk, is there any word, intelligible, sufficing, final? It is given best by Emerson, I think, in one sentence, "By contenting himself with obedience, man becomes divine." Weigh and measure each word. "Contenting himself," — no need of rapture; no need of exceptional gifts; no need of recognition or applause. "Obedience," — just homely, hourly fidelity. And obedience to how much! All we know of Nature's laws; all you and I learn of the working of our individual frame with its subtle conditions of body and mind; each fact we discern, — carries the obligation to meet it rightly. "Obedience" to an ideal of right which grows and heightens as fast as we conform to it; to-day's faithful toil raising us by a step to see some better deed to-morrow. "Obedience" — the tie which binds us to all loyal souls in comradeship, and to all disloyal souls in pledged effort for their recovery. Then, the outcome of obedience; "man becomes divine." Happy? Not always, but often, and growingly. Noble? Yes, constantly. Beloved? Yes, and more and

Digitized by Google

more as we grow worthier of love. Enlarging? Yes, blending with the lives we touch, blending with those who have gone before and those who shall come after; becoming linked ever closer with all this goodly universe. All things are ours, and we are God's.

One memorable day I spent in Concord. It was in early April, and the beauty of earth was grave and tender, with a sweet sobriety and a heart-filling promise. The place was full of memories; the Puritan settlers, the heroes who struck the first blow for liberty, the men of genius and achievement. Yet one spirit seemed to pervade and dominate all. The very landscape owed its meaning to the interpretation he had given it. His presence seemed to blend with field and forest and river and sky. I stood at last with my friendly guide beside his grave. It was marked by a monument unique as he was — a granite bowlder, its lower part of a dark gray hue, and the upper part a delicate rose tint. It then bore no inscription; it seemed to need none. Till that bowlder shall crumble, yes, as long as men shall tread these plains, will they remember Emerson, and bless the Power that gave him to mankind. As I remember that scene, there rises in my mind the

Digitized by Google

thought which that monument fitly symbolizes, with its gray and earth-fast base, and its summit the celestial rosy red of the morning: "By contenting himself with obedience, man becomes divine."

Digitized by Google

REMINISCENCES OF EDWARD EVERETT HALE

When news came of the death of Edward Everett Hale, it seemed to me his epitaph might be, "The most beloved man in America." By his personal presence he was known all over the country; by his multifarious writings he was more widely known; and in everything he wrote or said or did there was a quality of serviceableness and frank human kindness which irresistibly attracted. I have sometimes fancied an Exposition of the Solar System, to which each planet — each star if you like — should send samples of its productions. I have pleased my fancy by selecting certain individuals — from history or literature or personal acquaintance — to whom I should give my vote for a place in the exhibit of the Earth. And Hale is one of the men whom I should like to be shown to the Martians, Mercutians, *et al.*, as a specimen of what old Mother Earth can do when she tries.

Hale once said that a good biography of Lincoln could have been made by asking each of a

Digitized by Google

hundred men, taken just as you met them, to tell you his own particular story about Lincoln. That would not be a bad way to compile a biography of Hale himself. Here I make my fragmentary contribution of personal memories and impressions.

I came to know him in the early seventies, when I was managing editor of *The Christian Union* — now *The Outlook* — and he was an occasional contributor. Before meeting him personally I had read his *Ten Times One is Ten*. I think this booklet gives more of himself than any of his more famous works. Briefly: Harry Wadsworth, an obscure young man, dies, and around his grave a group of his friends recall the generous and helpful qualities which had endeared him, and agree that they will try to live in the same spirit, and to win others to a like purpose. At the end of a year they meet again, and find that each of the ten has drawn ten others into their informal brotherhood. The next year repeats the multiplication, and so the movement spreads. And the motto which is their sole creed and constitution is this: —

> Look up and not down;
> Look forward and not back;
> Look out and not in;
> And lend a hand.

Digitized by Google

By the tenfold rate of progress, in a few years all the world is brought in — all but one man. Universal peace and happiness reign; all the gunpowder is devoted to a salute of rejoicing, which awaits only the conversion of the last man. But Doctor Dryasdust, an eminent Presbyterian divine, has conscientious scruples against so lax a creed, and pronounces it no better than "a covenant of works." At this juncture a fire breaks out in a city block, and several women are driven by the flames to the roof, where no escape seems possible. As the crowd gaze in dismay, a shirt-sleeved figure is dimly seen through the smoke, who succeeds in crossing the gap from the next building, and rescues the women. The throng rush up the stairs to find the hero, and discover, in his study, resuming his clerical coat — Doctor Dryasdust! He makes light of his feat — "a mere gymnastic trick, learned in college in my unregenerate days." But the people cheer wildly, and the cry goes out, "Doctor Dryasdust has lent a hand!" A wave of jubilation sweeps round the globe; all the cannon roar their triumph. Almost drowned in the joyful din, Doctor Dryasdust's voice reiterates, "Brethren, I never will consent to a covenant of works!"

Digitized by Google

That story is just a piece of Hale himself — the deep purpose, the high spirits, the comradeship, the exuberance, the fun. And, winged by this extravaganza, there struck home to the common people's consciousness "the four mottoes," and they became a part of the everyday gospel. Hale said to me in later years: "They are just a modern version of Paul's 'faith, hope, and charity.' To look up and not down — that is faith. To look forward and not back — that is hope. To look out and not in — that is charity in thought. To lend a hand — that is charity in action."

One fortunate day Mr. Hale appeared in the *Christian Union* office. He was tall, with a face no one could pass without noticing: dome-like forehead, deep-set gray-blue eyes, swarthy complexion, haggard lines, a sweet and ready smile, grizzled hair, and full beard. The first impression was of a sort of John the Baptist. Then, with the first exchange of look and hand-grasp, the first tones of his deep voice, came the sense of cordial comradeship. His talk was graphic, wide-ranging, full of suggestion and entertainment; he was a prince of talkers.

When my wife and I made what was practically our first visit to Boston, Mr. Hale, on

Digitized by Google

whom we had no claim beyond a brief acquaintance, volunteered to introduce us to some of the attractions of the town, and gave up two of his busy days to act as the most delightful of cicerones. He showed us not only the famous features of the Hub — buildings, monuments, historic spots — but odd and out-of-the-way matters of interest. He took us to one place (it was in winter) where every day a dinner was given to any person who asked for it: "We don't publish it abroad, but no man in Boston need go without a dinner." He illustrated the best interiors of the city by showing us through the house of a merchant prince — a delightful abode, with open fires and fresh flowers everywhere. Finally he brought us in touch with his own work. We attended a meeting in his church of a class of ladies to whom he was giving a series of lectures on American history. After hearing his talk, one felt like discarding all other pursuits to study history! The evening of the same day, he took us to one of his church parlors where he had invited fifteen or twenty of his young people, on the threshold of manhood and womanhood. His purpose was to enlist them in an informal way in active service to people around them. In an hour's talk

Digitized by Google

he gave them his familiar gospel of helpfulness, with illustrations suited to their age and circumstances, and with a sweet persuasiveness. Then they all sang together "America" and "The Breaking Waves dashed High." When the meeting ended, the youngsters came round him, half-eager, half-shy, with questions and proposals: "Mr. Hale, could I do so-and-so?" "Would there be a chance for me in this direction, or in that?" And so they enlisted for the good fight — not by profession, but by beginning with some definite line of action.

Dismissing all chronological order, I am reminded here of another occasion, when he took me to the annual dinner of the Examiner Club. Ten or fifteen men, of various callings, and each, I believe, of some note in his own line of work, met for an excellent dinner and informal sociability. I sat at Doctor Hale's side, and through the long repast he carried on with me a steady flow of agreeable and racy talk, which kept my faculties alert in a most enjoyable give and take. At the same time he was maintaining a wholly different but no less continuous and vivacious stream of conversation with his neighbor on the other side! When the dinner was over, half of the diners clustered about

Digitized by Google

him, all with similar requests: "Doctor Hale, I've a patient who needs the right word said to him more than he needs medicine — can you come and see him?" "That woman you steered straight is getting into danger, and none of us quite know how to handle her — can you take her in hand again?" "Our Friendly Society has got into a muddle can you come in and have a talk with the officers?" And to every request came a prompt compliance.

And here I drop the thread of my own reminiscences to generalize a little. Hale — I call him by the simple name; the doctorate seems as superfluous to him now as to Franklin or Luther — Hale was characteristically and in the largest sense a minister. He was a servant — servant of humanity and friend of the world; in no abstract fashion, but comrade and helper to all the men and women and children he knew. He was by turns or at once preacher, lecturer, editor, story-writer, historian, organizer, reformer, chaplain of the Senate, and twenty things besides. The variety of his occupations was partly due, I suppose, to an immense vitality, for which no one channel or ten channels sufficed. It belonged partly to his American temperament, stimulated for centuries by

Digitized by Google

a physical atmosphere which somehow drives brain and pulse at racing speed; partly to the social atmosphere which in our time and country urges, invites, and hurries to manifold activities. Whatever may have been its causes, this variety of occupations, with the tremendous pace at which they were carried on, affected not only the quantity but the quality of his life-work, and made it extensive rather than intensive. Most of his writings lacked the thorough workmanship to give them permanence. His histories had too large a proportion of fancy to fact. He started countless enterprises, many of which he never carried through. Some were carried through by others, some were stillborn. But it is idle to regret these limitations — they were the incidents of a genius and a character which both in achievement and nobility transcended most of the minute and scrupulous tribe — be it said with no disrespect to the steadier toilers. His special function was like that of a lamplighter who moves rapidly along, kindling the torches which will burn after he has gone — as, in the Easter illumination of St. Peter's at Rome, I have seen the outlines of the dome traced in swiftly advancing lines of light, borne forward by invisible hands.

Digitized by Google

Hale came of choice New England stock, and belonged by birth to the class which Doctor Holmes rather snobbishly portrayed as the New England Brahmins. But he was of the sort that will not even gild its aristocracy with such lofty phrases as *noblesse oblige*, but prefers to the dignified terrace the common ground of humanity. He was a democrat to the core. He was ready to make every man not only his friend but his teacher. His university was the working world. He gained something from the gardener, the fisherman, the pilot, the engineer, the commercial traveler. From a new kind of wheelbarrow to a new comet, he welcomed all fresh knowledge. And all discoveries, all utilities, each phase of nature, art, humanity, was to him a room or a window or a picture in our Father's house.

He was a graduate of Harvard, and a Unitarian minister; he was loyal to the university, the profession, and the denomination; yet he scarcely showed any earmark of either of the three. He found his theological school in his father's newspaper office. In his habits of mind and of work — save that the voice was equally his weapon with the pen — he was of the journalist type. He had the journalist's width of

Digitized by Google

interests, his instinct for the man on the street, his swift and usually rather light touch. He was thoroughly journalistic in the steady flow of production, which hinders the accumulation of power until it leaps the barrier in a cataract of splendid achievement.

One of his acquaintances said, "It seemed to me that Hale scarcely ever did any one thing as great as he had the capacity for. But once I saw him rise to the full height of his powers. It was at a dark time in the Civil War, at a public meeting when neither speakers nor audience seemed able to rise above the besetting depression. Then Hale took the platform, and with his noble voice and great personality made one of the most inspiring, thrilling speeches I ever listened to. In that hour he rose to his ideal possibilities."

In contrast with another great apostle of his time and town, Phillips Brooks, who threw almost his whole power into the distinctive work of the Christian ministry, Hale took an active and leading part in many of the social and political movements of his day. We find him in 1854, during his Worcester pastorate, helping to organize the New England Emigrant Aid Society, the foremost agency in filling Kan-

Digitized by Google

sas with settlers who were to win the Territory to freedom. All through the Civil War he was speaking, writing, organizing, to keep the Northern conscience true to the highest aims, and to nerve its heart for achievement and endurance. In the white-hot glow of those days was struck out his most famous story, *The Man Without a Country*. In his maturity and later life he was active in the various forms of "the new charity" for the rescue of the fallen, the lifting of the "submerged tenth," the realization of human brotherhood in the organization of society as well as by the personal touch. It came like the crown of his career that his was one of the earliest voices to call for international peace through systematic arbitration, as a practicable and perhaps a near achievement. Come it must and will, whether soon or late; and Edward Hale may then be remembered not only as "the dreamer whose dream came true," but as one who helped translate the dream into actuality.

He was a man of clear-cut opinions, strong convictions, and vigorous prejudices. I have heard him contrast two preachers — I have forgotten their names: "One talked in this way: 'My dear friends, I am saying to you what now

Digitized by Google

seems to me the sacred truth, but if to-morrow or the next hour I see it otherwise I shall be the first to say so; and if it now fails to commend itself to your best intelligence and feeling, then do not receive it.' The other man" — and this, I think, was Theodore Parker — "would say to his audience, 'This is the truth — it is God's own truth — and if you don't believe it and act on it you'll be damned!'" Certainly Hale put the whole of himself behind each message.

The impress of the war for Liberty and Union left him, like so many of his contemporaries, a stiff Republican for life, go the grand old party where it would. When James Freeman Clarke — his brother in spirit, though almost antithetical in temperament, and fighting usually in the same ranks — when Clarke and many others of his friends went over to Cleveland and the Mugwumps in 1884, it was a grief to him. He held to Ben Butler, one of his war heroes, when the moral forces of Massachusetts rallied against him. For very many years he could hardly dissociate the South from the barbaric taint of slavery. His heart and soul went out to the young and vigorous West. One might fancy that the meeting-point of the sections in his mind, when the whole reunited country

Digitized by Google

became indeed his country, was found in the Southwest, where Texas was made the scene of some of his historic romances. Certainly the all-round Americanism of his loyalty, as well as the typical Americanism of his character, gave fitness and fineness to his office, in his last years, as chaplain of the United States Senate.

But, after all, Hale was beyond everything a minister of religion in its special sense. In this respect I judge that no man was a better index and representative of the broadest and best tendencies of American Christianity at the end of the nineteenth century; while, at the same time, there was a most individual flavor to his work. In a way he was a most typical religious teacher and worker of his time; but, further, he was Edward Everett Hale, and unlike anybody else.

As to his immediate spiritual ancestry, he stood in the second generation of American Unitarians. In the growth of the Unitarian body two tendencies were notable. Unitarianism was the natural channel, the open field, for that intense questioning of the universe, in the interest of the spiritual life, which, with the *Institutes* of Calvin as its starting point and

Digitized by Google

first text-book, has run its course in New England from Jonathan Edwards until to-day. Also, both Channing's leadership and the conditions of New England and Boston gave the Unitarians a strong impulse toward social, political, and humanitarian reforms. Of these two tendencies, it was not at all with speculative Unitarianism that Hale was in sympathy. He accepted as his birthright the intellectual freedom and the simple and vital conception of religion which his spiritual fathers bequeathed. But as to the conundrums of the universe, the cosmic philosophy, and what not — let others puzzle over them; his be it to plow and sow and garner and distribute food for the children of God!

When Theodore Parker broke with the whole supernatural theology, planted himself on a religion of simple theism, and swung a battle-ax against old creeds as against social abuses, Hale was one of the few Unitarian ministers who had a cordial hand and an open pulpit for the iconoclast. But the iconoclast's temper and methods were not his. So that men found access to a living and fatherly God, he cared not what road of rite or doctrine they followed. He stood on the simple creed of which we might almost

Digitized by Google

say, "Most can raise the flower now, for all have got the seed." Its familiar expressions are such phrases as "The fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of men," "The love of God and the service of men in the spirit of Jesus," Hale's own "four mottoes," and such like. And when Hale taught this old-new gospel, found fresh phrases for it, illustrated it by story, verse, by extravaganza even, exemplified it every day in his public and private life, put it to use in societies to help all kinds of troubled souls and suffering bodies, welcomed fellowship with every one who would "lend a hand" — why, he naturally found everywhere stout hands and warm hearts welcoming him. Little need to hew at the barriers of sect when they were being fast submerged by the rising tide. Who cared whether Harry Wadsworth was a Unitarian or a Baptist?

Of the two aspects of religion, the Godward and the manward, it is the human relation with which Hale's name is especially associated. But to him the human service had as its background and atmosphere a Divine presence, a communion with the invisible, giving support and gladness, and bringing the soul into conscious touch with its source and home. One of

Digitized by Google

his characteristic phrases was "The Real Presence." This familiar symbol of Catholic worship he used in a universal sense.

I do not remember any intellectual arguments addressed by Hale against unbelief. But the way of life which he taught and which he lived, and which as a practical and everyday matter is open to every one who wishes to follow it, generates an atmosphere in which skepticism withers. It is the life of the spirit — the life of service, sympathy, aspiration, reverence — which brings man into realization of the spiritual universe. You fight the weeds in your garden path, chopping away with hoe and rake, only to renew the fight a few days later. But strew the path thoroughly with coarse salt, and the weeds fail to put in an appearance. So the skepticism which crops up again after the keenest edge of dialectics has been laid at its root, dies away in a soil impregnated with homely fidelities and generous affections. Edward Hale's words and acts were constantly charging the soil of men's hearts with that antiseptic quality.

And here again it seems to me his work was typical of the Time-Spirit. In the downfall of religious authority and the confrontal of man

Digitized by Google

with new aspects of the universe there is a multiform effort to reconstruct the inner world — to reconceive man's relations with the whole. Speculative philosophy is inevitable and serviceable. But while idealist, materialist, positivist, pragmatist, are fighting their battles, it seems sometimes as if the foundation of man's higher life was in suspense or solution — and how is his house to stand? But meanwhile the Great Mother has other activities in full progress. Men are throwing themselves into human service with new ardor. The love and sympathy and comradeship which have been generated in the human family — with its "true and original trinity of father, mother, and child" (Hale's phrase) — this spirit is being wonderfully extended into wider relations. It is rising through the loyalty of class, community, nation, toward one all-including human brotherhood. The "bridal dawn of thunder peals" is the herald of the advancing realization of the saint's vision, the philosopher's Utopia, in common human affairs. In a word, while speculative philosophy still gropes and battles, the advance of actual knowledge is matched by the progress of human sympathy and human serviceableness. And in a society

Digitized by Google

so humanized man will recognize his spiritual and divine relations as he has never recognized them yet. Such a reading is justified by that great saying of the New Testament: "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God, and every one that loveth is born of God and knoweth God."

So we come back to Hale's distinctive mission — the promulgation of human love and helpfulness. "Promulgation" — but it was not his preaching in itself that counted most, but the practice that weighted and winged his preaching. As I remember him, it is not the sermon, the romance, the history, that I most recall, but the constant flow of activities — the morning's desk piled high with letters, appeals of every sort; the swift, effective dealing with the pile, aided by the little group of devoted helpers who were always at his service; the calls, the journeys, the casual street meetings, with their various fruit. I spoke of a possible biography made up of the personal stories of a hundred people; it is along this line of miscellaneous helpfulness that the stories would be richest. There was nothing professional about it all. He did such things, not because he was a salaried minister, nor because his theory of

Digitized by Google

religion called for it, but primarily out of simple human kindness.

The way he remembered individual cases and faces was wonderful. His congregation was spread from Newfoundland to Alaska. It was said of a certain mother, "Her heart had a separate cell of honey for each of her children"; and Hale seemed to have an individual niche for each one of thousands of souls. A woman who knew him only by reputation found herself moved to confide in him and ask his advice in a domestic problem closely affecting her happiness. He listened attentively, then said: "This is too serious and complicated for an offhand answer. Come again in a few days and I will tell you what I think." Some unexpected turn of affairs opened the woman's way, and she did not return. Several years afterward she was leaving a train at a railway station, and as she passed down the aisle she saw him (they had never met but once) occupying a seat. With no sign from her he recognized her, and leaned forward with the exclamation, "My child, you never came back!"

I have not yet touched on a side of him most characteristic but hard to describe. He had wit, he had humor, and something more — a

Digitized by Google

vein of fancy, a happy and merry make-believe. Of his wit I must give one instance — the only saying of his own which I ever heard him recall. He was visiting Horace Mann in the early days of Antioch College, and in their walk about the grounds they encountered a sign reading, "Gentlemen are requested not to spit tobacco juice in the presence of ladies." Hale exclaimed against it. "But it is necessary," said Mann. "At least soften it somehow," said Hale. "Put it in Latin." "How could you say it in Latin?" asked Mann. "Why," replied Hale promptly, "*Ne quid nimis* — ne quid nigh Miss!"

His peculiar humor and fancy blossomed out in a fairy-story quality which he often threw into his writings. It gave sometimes a whimsical form to his inveterate optimism. He turned to it for his own and his friends' delectation as a child turns to its play. It tinges many of his stories of serious purpose, like *Ten Times One is Ten*. Truth to tell, the roseate hue sometimes is followed by a touch of disheartenment in the listeners. Real drunkards are not always so surely and swiftly reformed; the visible kingdom of God does not seem to advance by a tenfold multiplication annually. I think Hale himself was sometimes misled by the glamour

Digitized by Google

his imagination threw. I happened to hear his address on the tenth anniversary of the founding of the "Lend a Hand Clubs" — a practical embodiment of the Harry Wadsworth idea. The preacher asked, How has it happened that the world has not been converted in these ten years? and really seemed to find some matter of surprise in the failure!

But his rainbows made the tramp along the dusty highway more cheerful, even if you never found the pot of gold. I saw his cheery make-believe illustrated during a visit to his summer residence, Matunuc — a charming, simple, spacious family home on the Rhode Island coast, set among huckleberry pastures and near the sea. The household was conducted under the form of a military post, in which each member had his or her special rank and functions. The day's entertainment would be announced by a placard like this: "The garrison will make an expedition by Long Pond to Smoke Hill. Commissary Ned will attend to the supply of provisions. Captain Rob will see to the water transportation. The force will rendezvous at the front gate at ten sharp." How delightful were the rambles and the sails and the whole indoor and outdoor life! With

Digitized by Google

equal pleasure I recall the Boston home, in Roxbury — the big, livable house set in its old-fashioned garden; the numerous family of boys and girls; the exhaustless bookshelves; the simple, hospitable household ways; the various visitors; the quaint observances, such as the use at family prayers of a Testament in a different language by each member of the circle. I remember how responsibilities were forgotten and all tension dissolved on that evening when a jolly group of us saw Boucicault (my first sight of him) with Annie Clarke in *Arrah na Pogue*, and on our return made merry over a modest night supper. I remember, at the end of that visit, I could n't help saying, "Doctor Hale, I hate to leave the delightful people among whom you have brought me." Quick came the answer, in his deep, mellow bass: "Make good society where you are!"

Lockhart, in writing of the financial embarrassments into which Walter Scott fell, says that a man whose imagination is so active as Scott's, and keeps him half the time in the world of fancy, can hardly be expected to keep always a firm footing when he returns to common earth. I suppose Hale's exuberant imagination sometimes took him off his feet, made him over-

Digitized by Google

hopeful in his estimates, and betrayed him into practical mistakes. He was not a first-class business man, and he sometimes got into difficulties from which his friends had to extricate him — a help they were glad to give. But, in the large and just view, his vivid fancy, along with his humor and playfulness, contributed vastly not only to getting good work done, but done with ease and joy. Never was a sinner who had and made so much fun as this saint! I once happened into the lecture-room of his church when he was giving a reading from his own stories. The story chosen was "The Yellow Dog" — one of his fantasies. It started with the going of Joseph to Egypt as prisoner of a company of Midianites, as told in Genesis. Joseph, so ran the tale, one night tried to steal away and go back to Canaan. He got safely as far as the borders of the encampment, when a yellow dog barked, gave the alarm, and Joseph was recaptured. Now, said the story, if the yellow dog had not barked, Joseph would have escaped, Jacob's family would never have gone to Egypt, and the whole course of the world's history would have been different. And then ensued a supposititious history of what might have been for the next forty or fifty genera-

Digitized by Google

he had his full share of heart-wringing sorrow. And he shared the sorrows of others, as all saviors must. His ministrations often called him to hard tasks — such, for instance, as taking an insane person to an asylum. He brought comfort to a burial, as he touched a wedding's happiness with something sacred and beautiful. A friend tells me, "After my wife's death he wrote me a letter, of which the very words printed themselves in my heart." And this letter my friend is good enough to let me give: —

MY DEAR, DEAR FRIEND:

Her beautiful picture lies before me here, as lifelike and as winning as ever. It has been on my table before me as I sit and write, every day since you were so thoughtful as to send it to me. And I have been, in the spirit, a companion to you in this journey and in these rests which I knew you so much enjoyed — a thousand times the more because you were together.

And now we must keep the picture without seeing her face again till we see her there. I cannot make it real. And I have had too much experience of such grief to think that I ever shall make it real. No! we are not meant to!

Digitized by Google

I think, and I hope, your experience will be what I have gone through, though of course I do not mean that I have ever had such a loss as yours — my own self wrenched away. But still I have looked death square in the face as you do.

Well! At first there was this horrid remembrance all the time of sickness — of this symptom and that medicine — and what this doctor said and what that one did not say. It has not been till afterwards that I sometimes have seen through into the infinite clear heaven. Afterwards — I call it a miracle — God himself does open one's eyes to see and one's heart to feel what passes all understanding.

But I did not write to say this — only to make you sure how we are sorrowing in your sorrow. My wife sends her best love to you.

Always yours,

EDWARD E. HALE.

It has been said that Hale's fame may not be permanent, at least in the degree that he deserves. But how little it matters! Tennyson speaks of a fame lasting perhaps for ages, yet transient in the presence of "Geology and Astronomy, terrible muses." Elsewhere he gives

Digitized by Google

as the aspiration of Virtue, not the glory of "a voice flying on to be lost on an endless sea," but rather "to go on and still to be." Milton speaks of the desire for fame as "the last infirmity of noble minds," and the noblest minds of all rise above it. With such we may rank our dear Edward Hale, by witness of his whole life, and especially of these verses, which seem to me as characteristic as anything he ever wrote. They are dated "All Souls' Day," and entitled

THE UNNAMED SAINTS

What was his name? I do not know his name.
I only know he heard God's voice and came;
Brought all he loved across the sea,
To live and work for God and me;
Felled the ungracious oak,
With horrid toil
Dragged from the soil
The thrice-gnarled roots and stubborn rock;
With plenty filled the haggard mountain-side,
And, when his work was done, without memorial died.
No blaring trumpet sounded out his fame;
He lived, he died. I do not know his name.

No form of bronze and no memorial stones
Show me the place where lie his moldering bones.
Only a cheerful city stands,
Builded by his hardened hands; —
Only ten thousand homes,
Where, every day,
The cheerful play
Of love and hope and courage comes;

Digitized by Google

These are his monuments, and these alone, —
There is no form of bronze and no memorial stone.

And I?
Is there some desert or some soundless sea
Where Thou, great God of angels, wilt send me?
Some oak for me to rend, some sod
For me to break,
Some handful of thy corn to take,
And scatter far afield,
Till it in turn shall yield
Its hundredfold
Of grains of gold,
To feed the happy children of my God?
Show me the desert, Father, or the sea.
Is it Thine enterprise? Great God, send me!
And though this body lie where ocean rolls,
Father, count me among All Faithful Souls!

Digitized by Google

WITH A SILVER-WEDDING GIFT

A QUARTER-CENTURY of married happiness, my dear Darby and Joan! What gift or greeting is good enough for such an anniversary as this? Millionaires do not need rich presents; so you, with your wealth of experience and memories, will accept as not unfit for the occasion the trifle I send — a second-hand trifle — and the thoughts that go with it.

On this silver-wedding day, you are more givers than receivers. For all we your friends enter sympathetically into something of the experience which has blessed you. One of the elements of the experience is this, that the two have grown ever nearer, while there yet remains the wonder and mystery of two separate souls, attracted but remote — a double star. Always nearer, and fulfilling more perfectly the ideal of that womanly love-poem: —

> Two to the world, for the world's work's sake,
> But each unto each, as in His sight, one.[1]

That early marvel of true love, the glimpse of another soul in its reality, — that still recurs,

[1] Mrs. Mulock Craik.

Digitized by Google

and all the intimate familiarity the years have brought only heightens the reverence and awe with which in sacramental moments you recognize the companion spirit, — so near and yet so far.

Your marriage has brought to you the marvel of parenthood. About that I do not speak, because I am one of the uninitiated. Life is something like Freemasonry — a series of initiations into rising grades of disclosure. One who has taken even the first degree knows secrets which are veiled from us outsiders; and to the Knight Templar are revealed further mysteries; and doubtless the Prince of Jerusalem is admitted into deeper wisdom; and so it goes on to the thirty-third degree. So we who are not Masons, but just plain sons and daughters of Adam, are given a series of initiations — sometimes without our consent being asked, or even much against our will. The nursery, the playground, sickness, — from mumps and measles up, — school and holidays, friendship, business, books, travel, success, disappointment, separation, reunion, bereavement, — oh, there are more than thirty-three degrees in the Society of the Sons of Adam! And one of the grandest degrees — the grandest are the com-

Digitized by Google

monest — is fatherhood and motherhood. Let the initiated speak of that if they will. There is no bar of secrecy in these mysteries; only, the secret, however frankly and eloquently told, can be but half understood save by those who have themselves taken the degree. I pass in respectful silence that relation of parenthood, of which Edward Hale has said — and not irreverently — "the true and original trinity is that of father, mother, and child." Sometimes, in looking on the devotion and tenderness of the motherly heart, I recall that untranslatable phrase of the Greek tragedian — δεινόν ἐστι τὸ τίκτειν — "marvelous and divine is motherhood."

Those who have taken the last degree of all — the passing away from earth — guard its secret well. But there are other degrees bordering on that. One of them — the parting of those who have been closest united — is yet untried by you, my dear married couple. But "love knows the secret of grief"; and in the consciousness of a union so vital that it suggests itself to be imperishable, you have had foretokens of that sacramental experience in which outward separation becomes a disclosure of deeper and eternal oneness.

Digitized by Google

You, who have had twenty-five years of schooling, have no doubt learned the answer of the riddle we gave the other day to our young friends just entering the school. How is it that some men and women without marriage acquire that intimate sympathy and close union with other lives to which marriage seems to be the natural gateway? How did they learn their lesson, — such men as Phillips Brooks and Whittier, or the saintly men in the Catholic priesthood, like Francis of Assisi and Fénelon? Such women as we all know, who, without motherhood or wifehood, bless others with the mother's tenderness and the wife's devotion? That question brings us to this answer: True marriage, itself a peculiar union of two, has yet as its brightest glory and inmost sweetness the same principle which unites us to all mankind and to the universe.

John and Jenny may wince a little at the suggestion of any widening of the wall of their dual paradise. Their Eden is just big enough for two — with the rose-bushes for employment and the animals for entertainment and the snake shut out — and they shrink from opening the gates to let in other folks. But you and I (this *I* stands for two) — you and I, dear

Digitized by Google

Darby and Joan, in the happy security the years have brought, are long past any fear that our best gifts can be lost by being shared. And we can gladly follow out this thought, and trace how the best quality in marriage — which, by special grace, even the unmarried may possess — widens out in ever-spreading circles.

There are, indeed, to every rightly mated pair their own peculiar dual possessions. There is the special fitness in tastes and temper and character. There is the feeling: "You, out of all the world, for me; I, out of all the world, for you." There is the always growing store of common interests, memories, friendships, possessions, seen and unseen, so rich and various that they even coin their own language, and every two use often a dialect of their own.

But look at the elements in marriage which lie deeper than these. There is the recognition in the beloved of the ideal self. Just such an ideal self, we know, exists in every man and woman, and we can learn by degrees to recognize it. The great spiritual geniuses are those who best discern this higher self in humanity. That was part of the power of Phillips Brooks, that he saw and spoke home to the very best in men. And when the preacher spoke to that

Digitized by Google

better possibility, it answered him, and began to be realized. We say this discernment of the nobler self belongs to the men of spiritual genius; but we may apply here the definition of genius as "an infinite capacity for taking pains," and develop the faculty in ourselves.

The history of Jesus is full of instances of this power,—so familiar they need not here be repeated, — his reading of the embryo saint and hero in Peter, in Zaccheus, in Mary Magdalen, and many another. And in learning to discern the best in every one we may make good in ourselves a little of the saying of Emerson: "The story of Jesus is the story of every man writ large."

This recognition of some potential nobility and lovableness in men is the best inspiration for helping them. A true wife ministers unceasingly to her husband, not because it is her duty, but because he is to her infinitely worth trouble and pains. Now go into yonder asylum for feeble-minded children; you shrink away from its poor inmates with their blank or distorted faces; but watch that noble-faced matron, — she is as tender as any mother, and to her they are not repulsive but attractive. She has found out what is in them, has discovered

Digitized by Google

the poor little germs of intelligence and goodness, and their very helplessness and need endear them to her. She tells you: "When I first came I could n't help crying all the time, and soon I told the doctor: 'I can't stand this, I must go home.' He said: 'What you need is more work and more responsibility.' He gave them to me, and my tears soon ceased, and now I wake up every morning happy in the thought of the work before me."

You, my dear couple, know nothing for yourselves of that sharpest test which marriage brings to some, — the persistent weakness or unworthiness of husband or wife. What is the secret that enables a woman to go on for years and years enduring and trying to reclaim a drinking husband? What keeps the heart in a man whose wife has through nervous invalidism lost all courage and self-support till he carries her like a dead weight? Nobody can put that secret in words; call it clear grit or call it the grace of God — it is a mystery still. But underlying such courage is there not a faith that below the wreck there is something precious, something salvable, some indestructible germ that will at last, sometime and somewhere, blossom out in manhood or angelhood?

Digitized by Google

Just such sublime faith and unconquerable love we may sometimes see, practiced not toward one's own, but toward those who have but the human claim. I remember one man, a Church of England clergyman, working among the poor in London. A sturdy, rosy Englishman, his laugh was a delight; and to see him come into a room where some of his people were gathered was something to remember — the smile that went round, the quickened, happy look on every face. Well, at one time he had given himself specially to work among fallen women in London. I asked him, "Did you ever find any one without some good in her?" "No," he answered, "and I never met one who did not show herself touched and grateful when treated with respect." He told one thrilling story of struggle and rescue. He first saw the woman, a brilliant creature, at a midnight meeting, and he induced her to put herself under the care of some good women, where she was reclaimed, and took a place as servant. She was traced by a man who had known her, and inveigled away. She wrote to the clergyman for the jewels she had intrusted to him, and he required her to come for them in person, which she did. "A single day had changed her

Digitized by Google

whole appearance, and from a decent, modest woman she was transformed into a bedizened harlot of the streets." Again his words won her back, and she consented to go into a reformatory. For a while the good sisters in charge were driven to their wits' end by the droll pranks into which she would at times break out. She became interested in some young girls who were brought in, and in helping them she grew steady; she gradually became a new creature; and at last she was admitted to the sisterhood. "I was in the chapel," he said, "when she assumed the dress and took the vows, and her face had an expression I cannot describe, — it was like the face of an angel. And yet I must confess," added the dear old fellow, "it did not touch me quite so deeply as when the struggle was still doubtful."

To see by glimpses the ideal self, to believe in it still when unseen, and fit one's act to that vision and that faith, — this is the heart of true marriage, and it is the heart of the true relation with all mankind.

We look beyond mankind. It is first some beloved face in which we see "the light that never was on sea or land." Then we catch the light on other faces. And in the face of Mother

Digitized by Google

Earth we learn to see a beauty beyond language or thought. Through this, too, shines spirit — the universal spirit. The toil that tasks us trains us, and we find that our work-place is not a mere shop — far less a prison — but a palace. Plying the snow shovel, one looks up — a white bridal veil covers the world, and through it shines the bride's face of love. It has taken long to learn this finer sight. How many ages did the sunlight take to develop in the growing creature the eye? How many ages more before the spirit of man acquired the vision that sees the soul back of the face, and back of the material world the spiritual presence?

The analogy of marriage goes yet farther. In all times something of daring and of strength has gone to the winning of the wife. The primeval man drove off his rivals by the strong arm, or won the fair one's favor by showing himself bolder or craftier than they. In higher society he must meet the tests by which the growing woman-soul judges her would-be mate. Not always does the saying hold good, "Happy 's the wooing that 's not long a-doing." Sometimes the longer wooing gives fuller mutual knowledge and a firmer foundation. You

Digitized by Google

had your own story, my dear Darby and Joan, which shall not be told at large; but for a while the prize was withheld, for causes which made that prize more dear, and the full manhood of the wooer was called into play, all his resolution and patience and generosity, before he won the supreme happiness of his life. So, the world itself must be wooed and won by man. Nature's forces are set to challenge his every resource. Single-handed he would be overwhelmed; frost and heat and tempest would sweep him away; but linked together mankind masters Nature, makes her a servant, wins her as friend, worships her as goddess. Clough has sung that idyl: —

Yea, the rough rock, the dull earth, the wild sea's furying waters
(Violent say'st thou and hard, mighty thou think'st to destroy)
All with ineffable longing are waiting their Invader,
All, with one varying voice, call to him, "Come and subdue!"
Still for their Conqueror call, and, but for the joy of being conquered
(Rapture they will not forego), dare to resist and rebel;
Still, when resisting and raging, in soft undervoice say unto him,
Fear not, retire not, O man; hope evermore and believe!

One more likeness between the wedlock of two and the wider union. With what a divine surprise comes the first sense of being loved! No poet has sung it, no tongue can tell it, but

Digitized by Google

the heart that has felt it never forgets. Wise men tell us, and rightly, that to love is the first and great necessity. Yes, that is our part, but like heaven's own answer — rather, like its all undeserved grace — comes the wonder of being loved. It is the mutual relation, love given and received, that is the perfect estate of man. The first surprise of it may pass, and the rapture grow calm. But the reality abides and grows. It proves itself by a thousand homely services, by patience unmeasured, by self-sacrifice becoming unconscious; by

> The fireside sweetnesses, the heavenward lift,
> The hourly mercy of a woman's soul.[1]

And this is to man the deepest revelation, the truest interpretation, of the universe. The love given to him thus in its quintessence, he learns is diffused through humanity, and springs from the Power that creates and guides humanity. It wells up in gratitude for kindnesses. It glorifies each lowly home. It transforms the selfish struggle for advantage into family affection, into the clan's allegiance, the brotherhood of toilers, the patriotism of a nation, the sacrament of friendship, the oneness of humanity. It is the force which slowly lifts

[1] Lowell.

Digitized by Google

The Riverside Press
CAMBRIDGE . MASSACHUSETTS
U . S . A

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

FEB 14 1912

JUL 30 1912

Digitized by Google